The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOLUME XIII New York, Saturday, November 3, 1917 Number 157

Contents

Editorial Notes 1
Leading Editorials
The Italian Disaster 4
The Great Anomaly 5
As to Future Liberty Loans 6
The Farmer and the War 8
General Articles
The One Thing Needful, I ..... William Hard 10
Degas and Draughtsmanship ..... Leo Stein 13
Political Revolt in the Northwest, I ..... Charles Merz 15
In Explanation of Our Lapse ..... John Dewey 17
They Do It Better in England ..... Signe K. Toksvig 18
A Communication 20
Correspondence 21
After the Play ..... F. H. 23
Books and Things ..... P. L. 24
Reviews of Books
An English Radicalism ..... H. J. L. 25
Gorky's Youth ..... R. B. 26
Recent Publications 27

THE replacement of Michaelis by Count von Hertling appears to be a step toward the democratization of Germany, although not a long step. Something is gained through the transfer of the chancellorship from Prussian to Bavarian hands. Von Hertling is conservative, opposed to parliamentary control of the administration, but his reasons are not Prussian reasons. Von Hertling's opposition to constitutional reform arises out of the fear that all imperial legislation would be manipulated in the interest of the Prussian state, if the Reichstag, in which Prussian representations would have a large majority, became the supreme organ of government. The recent peace agitation was conducted under Bavarian leadership, and it is possible that Von Hertling was in closer sympathy with it than Michaelis. It is further not without significance that Michaelis was ousted, not on account of a breakdown in the administrative service, but on account of his failure to win and retain the confidence of the Reichstag majority. The Kaiser, to be sure, was careful to avoid any appearance of consulting the Reichstag in reference to Michaelis's successor, but an extreme solicitude for the preservation of forms of the prerogative is a confession that the prerogative is not so securely established as formerly.

"AMERICA against Europe: this is gradually becoming the character of the war, through the Entente's fault." This is the grave charge brought against the Allies by Count von Hertling. The outrage of dragging America into a European squabble must appear in German eyes as of a piece with the employment of African and Asiatic troops. In spite of the present superficial appearance of discord, Europe, viewed in the light of German philosophy, is fundamentally an organic community of nations, with common interests against the rest of the world to which all internal conflicts of interest ought to be subordinated. In the same light, the great war is simply a civil war, in which the enemies of Germany are only rebels, so long as they do their own fighting, but traitors as well when they call in black or brown or yellow or American men. One of the benefits the Germans may be expected to gain from the failure of their project of conquest will be the shattering of a provincialism that refuses to recognize that the community of civilized nations transcends the limits of the European continent, and even transcends the limits of the white race.

BRAZIL'S declaration of war against Germany emphasizes the international character of the Allied enterprise. All the greater nations of the world except Germany and Austria-Hungary are now associated in a league held together by a common international purpose. Americans have especial reason for welcoming the accession of Brazil to the league of the Allies. Other Latin American states may be expected to follow Brazil's example, with the result that pan-Americanism stands a chance of becoming an accomplished fact instead of an aspiration. The German military party will no doubt make light of Brazil's belli-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gerency. Not so the German merchants and manufacturers who are looking beyond the war to the work of reconstruction. If Brazil had remained neutral through the war, they might have counted upon at least one market of great potentiality, one immense storehouse of raw materials, in which they might have traded on equal terms with England, France and the United States. In this one state, they might have preserved intact their commercial organization and their propertied interests. The dream of Brazil as a settlement colony was still vivid in the minds of many Germans. With Brazil in the war, German interests in the country must inevitably decay; and after the war, Brazil, in common with the other nations leagued against Germany, will find means to prevent any recrudescence of the policy of "peaceful penetration."

JAPAN, so it is reported, is to receive from the United States the steel she so urgently requires for her shipyards, and in return is to lend the use of some hundreds of thousands of tons of shipping. Thus little by little are the differences of interest within the Allied camp negotiated away. Ever since the enactment of our embargo measures, the Japanese shipyards have suffered under a steel famine. The world's greatest need was ships, and in Japan were shipyards half closed down, skilled workmen idle. We were in a position to turn out ship plates beyond the requirements of our own shipyards, but only at the cost of neglecting other demands for steel, also urgent. We could afford to furnish Japan with steel only in return for an immediate contribution to the merchant fleets in occidental waters. Japan appears to have accepted the bargain, which we need not suppose was an easy one from her national point of view. Her tonnage was in excessive demand on the Pacific in consequence of the depletion of the fleets of the western nations. She was building up her trade, and if she could have kept most of her existing ships out of harm's way, at the same time proceeding uninterruptedly with the construction of new ones, her commercial position in the Pacific would have been securely established at the end of the war.

ONE million and three quarters subscribed to the Second Liberty Loan by the Officers Training Camp at Plattsburgh is a record to shame the civilians who have held back on account of their unwillingness to sacrifice present means of enjoyment to their country's need. The men at Plattsburgh might well have considered that in offering their lives, if the fortune of war should demand them, they have given enough. Officers in training are not a class that can easily dispense with their modest stipends. As a matter of fact, most of the Plattsburgh subscriptions represented heavy personal sacrifices, at least as sacrifices are reckoned in civil life. They were made not out of considerations of ultimate personal benefit—although our soldiers if they adopt the habit of thrift will return from their campaigns better prepared to take a fresh start in civil life than any body of veterans in our history. The Plattsburgh men subscribed because, more than their civilian fellows, they had a realization of the future needs of their country, and desired to set an example worth following. A similar spirit has been evinced by our soldiers, both volunteer and conscripts, in the training camps, and by Pershing's men in France, who, one might suppose, would not now be much inclined to take upon their shoulders a part of what is properly the civilian's burden.

IN the demonology of the agrarian democracy from which Speaker Clark derived his political creeds, financiers, stock gamblers and usurers are all one malignant group, adepts at conspiracy against working humanity and their country. Accordingly when some one, no doubt of the same school of economics as Speaker Clark, gave him the tip that a financial conspiracy had been organized in New York against the Second Liberty Loan, he accepted it at its face value as something natural enough to be believed even without inside information. Is it not the object in life of the financial group to increase the breed of barren money? Would not this group like to see a four per cent loan fail, in order that we might have a five per cent issue? The enormous subscriptions of financial New York to the loan in its last days are cited by the press as a sufficient refutation of the Speaker's charge, and they appear to be accepted as such by Speaker Clark himself. But there is a still more conclusive refutation. Financial New York does not want the interest on government loans to go up. If United States bonds yielded five per cent, what would happen to the value of the vast mass of state and municipal bonds yielding four per cent, of corporation bonds yielding four or four and one half per cent, to long term mortgages yielding five per cent? Inevitably such values would fall below par. The individual holders of such investments could not possibly secure adequate compensation, through the higher rate on their new investments, for the impairment of the capital value of their existing investments. As for the corporate bondholders, such as the savings banks, the trust companies and the life insurance companies, the fall of capital values would seriously endanger their solvency. There may have been "financial conspiracies" in New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concerning the Second Liberty Loan, but their object must have been to make it so great a success that the government might have no occasion to raise the rate of interest.

WHATEVER the result of the election in New York City on Tuesday, there is one thing that it will not tell, namely, what kind of government a majority of the voters really want. Mayor Mitchel's reëlection will ensure New York four years more of as good a government as it has ever had. There is every sort of reason for believing that Judge Hylan's election will give the city as wretched a specimen of inefficient and corrupt government as it had when Van Wyck was mayor. That is the issue as it would have been presented to the voters if they had been shut up to a choice between Tammany government and good government. Of course it is not the single issue at this election. The issues are even more numerous and even more confused than usual. The German victories in Italy, which have no direct bearing upon municipal policy or administration, will beyond doubt have an influence upon the New York returns. These victories, with their portentous military and political possibilities, may keep Mr. Hillquit's vote from being as large as it would have been had the election taken place before Mackensen began his drive. They show, with sinister and menacing clearness, the meaning of Mr. Hillquit's attitude toward the war, of his perfect willingness to have America's part in the war an absolute failure. He would be glad to have the United States fail to put and supply and keep an army in the field. The results of such a failure may be foreseen by anybody who reads the news from Italy.

NEVERTHELESS, because the time was too short to make every voter understand these things, many men will vote for Hillquit who have neither part nor lot in his desire to see America fail, and who utterly abhor the notion of German victory. They will vote for him, as we said last week, because they wish to protest as democrats against the tide of intolerance which always threatens to submerge a nation just beginning a war, and which no one in authority is publicly making an attempt to check. By few will the votes these men cast be distinguished from the other Hillquit votes. Every enemy of the United States, in Germany and here at home, will interpret the total as a declaration against American participation in and prosecution of the war. There is, however, no reason why those whose business it is both to interpret and to form public opinion should see the Hillquit vote exactly as the enemies of this country see it. Our leaders at Washington can understand it, if they will, as in part a sign that some men who are heart and soul for the war, and for a secure instead of a German peace after the war, are also convinced that the war can and must be carried on without the abolition of free discussion in the United States.

GAS companies, like all other public utility concerns, are face to face with serious financial problems arising out of conditions of increasing costs. They cannot be blamed if they seek authority to raise rates, even if in case of success they simply shoulder their perplexities upon a public consisting largely of persons who are also confronted with rising prices mercilessly sapping away at incomes that refuse to rise. The gas companies may be in exceptionally difficult circumstances; at all events, their case ought to be heard on its merits. But the companies seem to be courting prejudice against them in their stand on the toluol question. This by-product the government needs in immense quantities. The gas companies can produce a large part of the goverment's requirements, provided that they are permitted to change from a candle power unit to a thermal unit. The standard they propose would apparently give the consumer less light per cubic foot, but a reduction in price is no part of the companies' program. As it appears to the layman, the companies propose to take toluol out of the consumer and sell it to the government at the very generous price the government pays. What else can one infer from the argument of the Consolidated Gas Company in its request for a rehearing on the New York Public Service Commission's order permitting the necessary change in standards, on condition that if the consumers must use more gas to obtain a given result, they shall be entitled to a rebate? The company complains that it " is facing conditions unparalleled in the history of the lighting industry and is operating under a rate fixed by statute that borders on confiscation." What has this to do with toluol? The statute is not one of the Medes and Persians, forever unchangeable. Let the companies change it if they can, instead of grasping at the subterfuge of reducing the standard in the interest of the nation and to their own profit.

OCTOBER, 1917, will be remembered as the month when soldiers of the United States took for the first time their place among the other fighters on a European battlefield. They were there, for the moment, only to finish their training, and not for any immediate help they could bring to the common cause. Yet their appearance in the French trenches will

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appeal to the imagination of after ages, as it appeals to all our imaginations today. The first edge of our power has touched the enemy of all liberal nations. Some German soldier has perhaps seen these small beginnings of a movement which will grow and grow until German armies can feel the blows struck by an opponent that German statesmen have created and called across the seas.

The Italian Disaster

AFTER the Rumanian collapse, after the Russian débacle, everybody supposed that the Allied cause had faced out its worst discouragements. What has happened on the Italian front is a ghastly surprise. At the lowest estimate of the results of German victory, the whole gains of the Italians since their entry into the war are at the point of being swept away. But the disaster may be much more far-reaching. The forces under Mackensen's command are obviously tremendous. If they could sweep the late Italian offensive before them like chaff, their momentum can hardly be checked at the frontier. The northern provinces of Italy may well be overrun, and it is not to be forgotten that these are the provinces in which the war spirit was most rife. It is decidedly possible that Italy may be placed in a position where she can no longer count as a serious factor in the war.

And were Italy thus reduced to impotence—though not suing for peace, for in this war nations lose all, but not their self-respect, as witness Belgium, Serbia, Rumania—nothing could be expected in the way of an offensive from the Greeks and the Allied forces at Saloniki. Italian cooperation was essential to effective operations on the Saloniki front. And this would mean that the Central Empires would be freed from any serious menace except on the western front.

The moral consequences of an overwhelming Italian defeat would be no less grave. Such terrible punishment inflicted upon an enemy state, formerly a member of the Dreibund, could not fail to strengthen the fighting spirit of the German people. Nor could it fail to consolidate the position of the autocracy and the military party. For the time, at any rate, Austrian disintegration would have been arrested. If Bulgaria had actually been coquetting with the Allies, we might be quite certain that she would return to her old undivided allegiance. The German party in Turkey could be expected to avail itself to the utmost of this new exhibition of Teutonic power. Turkey, we may recall, cherished an especial grudge against Italy.

This, to be sure, is assuming the worst. It is assuming that the Germans will not be checked before they have deeply penetrated Italian territory. This is going beyond the probabilities in the case. But it is a wholesome thing to assume the worst. The great defect of Allied opinion hitherto has been the tendency to excessive optimism; to overestimation of the forces on our side and to underestimation of the power that remains in the Germans. How brief is the time since our newspaper strategists were heralding the Italian offensive as a probably decisive operation in the war. The Italians were within forty miles of Laibach, and from Laibach the road lay open to Vienna and Buda-Pesth. Open, yes, except for the Austrians and the Germans, certain to appear whenever Austria should be seriously menaced. Germans, who had served their apprenticeship in the trenches in France, facing enemies incomparably better equipped with the materials of war than any Italian force descending into Austria from the Adriatic highlands could possibly be.

If the worst is actually happening, and Italy is practically out of the fight, how does the general case of the Allies stand? There will be no short cut to victory, through prosperous ventures in subsidiary fields. The Germans will have to be beaten on the western front. And this, in the opinion of the most competent military critics, was bound to be the case in any event. The main body of the forces of the Central Empires is holding that front. Successes elsewhere could be but transient, so long as this main body remained undefeated.

And the military situation on the western front remains practically unchanged. Whatever befalls Italy, the flanks of the French-British-Belgium army are protected by the Swiss mountains and the sea. Even if the Germans conquered all northern Italy, they could not afford to detach men from the main front to attempt an invasion of France from the south. Lines of communication would work against them. As before, the seas remain open for supplying the armies in France and for conveying American reinforcements. As before, the weight of men and metal runs against the Germans. If the Germans and Austrians establish new lines on Italian soil, they will require at least as many men to hold them as faced the Italians in the mountainous terrain where the fighting of the last two years has taken place. Thus no new German forces are likely to be released for the west.

The defeat of the Germans on the western front remains, as before, difficult, but not impossible. The defeat of the Germans on this front is now the only thing that matters. And while the difficulty of achieving a victory over Germany remains the same, the necessity of victory has become much more imperative. Were the war to end on terms the Germans would now demand, the whole of Europe, east of the French boundary, would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tremble before the German power. When the war opened, the German-Austrian trend toward the east was wedged between two Powers with identical ambitions, Russia and Italy. If Germany now holds her own against France and England and the United States, after the peace she would pursue her eastern designs undisturbed. Russia would not dispute the claim of Germany to paramountcy on the Bosporus, nor Italy her claim to Asia Minor. Germany would thus have achieved more than she had hoped to achieve when she entered upon the war.

It is not impossible to defeat Germany. Her defeat will come through no miracle, but through perseverance under suffering and loss of the three Allied nations that combine industrial power with military fitness and have no particularistic interests to misdirect their efforts, France, England and the United States. The responsibility of the three nations is a heavy one. Upon themselves rests all hope of an international order based upon free cooperation, instead of upon subserviency and autocratic hegemony. England and France are alive to the responsibility. They are putting forth their maximum energies. We are doing much, but we must do more, and quickly. With Italy, we have suffered defeat, but it is the character of a great nation to meet defeat with new evidence of resolution, new exhibitions of energy. German fighting morale has been heightened, but when in the course of months it becomes clear to Germany that the morale of her enemies has also been heightened she will again ask herself, Of what profit are victories in subsidiary fields, the crushing of weaker nations, when we cannot shake off the tightening grip of the armies at our own gates?

The Great Anomaly

ONE of the convenient tricks of political argument is to dilate on a cause that is generally accepted and then to assert that another issue "must be considered" in its bearing on it. If a good connection can be shown between the established issue and the tentative issue, there is every reason to expect public favor to envelop both. There are ententes and alliances among causes which make weak ones yearn to the stronger, and induce sturdy causes to help limping friends along.

Because the war is now paramount for the United States, it is the war to which every other issue clings. If you wish to damn the argument of an opponent you say, "A country at war is in no mood for pedantic issues." If you wish to bolster an argument you turn it about. "Whatever claims a cause may urge on the voter, those claims have primarily to be considered in their bearing on the organization of the state for war." And then you do everything to associate your own issue with the requirements of the state at this juncture. The organization of the state on military lines is in fact so supreme and pressing a necessity that it is natural to follow this method even in the case of so persistent an issue as woman suffrage. And because military requirements are paramount, it is not unnatural to assume that they are deemed paramount by the people at large, thus leading to the conclusion that it is not only wise but expedient to make woman suffrage a war issue. Yet no one who has kept his perspective on the long and tortuous human movement which has brought the political claims of woman to the front is content to have the issue completely rested on the precarious ground that is offered by war and war sentiment.

The war has served woman suffrage in many respects. When Miss Rankin voted against the war in Congress, tearfully or the reverse, there was a certain tinge of sanction given to the local American prejudice that women at large are so strongly against war that their enfranchisement would be equivalent to committing the country to an uncalculating sentimental pacifism. That illusion has since been laid to a well-earned rest. Women at large have shown no special sex attitude towards the war. What they have shown, to the simple amazement of veteran non-suffragists, is the capacity for organized endeavor which every suffragist, male or female, supposed them to be sufficiently human to possess. The latent capacity of women, perhaps the strongest factor in forming the conviction of most suffragists, has been so completely demonstrated in England that the whole premise of suffrage has been granted, leaving the terms of enfranchisement to be fought out according to the British habit, bit by bit. But valuable as these indications of serviceability are, and significant the conversion of the House of Commons, there are greater and deeper reasons why, even in war time, women should, this election day in New York, be given the vote.

Those deeper reasons include the war rather than depend on it. It is perfectly true that the democratic state, with all its pretensions to accommodate the will of the people, cannot possibly survive if the people do not lend themselves as effectually to military organization as the undemocratic states of Germany and Austria and Turkey. There is no such thing as a fool-proof policy of government. But the supreme companion of military organization in time of war is a citizenship, military and civil, possessing a healthily organized will. A country at war is interpreted by its citizens according to their own desires as well as according

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the ambitions of the state, and it is the boast of democratic government that the correspondence between the state and the people is closer, more disinterested, more inclusive, more healthy, than in the case of any other form of government. When such a state embarks on a war some thousands of miles from home, and conscripts its male population to that end, the very compulsion that is employed raises the question of approximating the will of the people to the same height as military organization. And it is just as necessary to enlist the women of the country in that national enterprise, to enlist them in the capacity of voters and differentiated units, as to enlist the men who are supporting the military task.

But quite as necessary as to unite popular will behind the actual military organization is to recognize in time of war the specific responsibility of democracy. It may be argued that the machinery of voting is like any other machinery, only a means to an end, and that the widening of the franchise may mean nothing more than the establishment of another procedure as futile as the primaries. It is worth noting that no American employs this argument in regard to the German scheme of franchise. The voter may in himself be as powerless and insignificant as a single cell in any organism. He may, quantitatively, have only one-millionth part of a yes or a no in the decision of his particular community. Yet this function of his citizenship is so incomparable with any other that an immense factor in the present conflict is just the difference between the franchise of commonwealths and the franchise of autocracies, the responsiveness of government to peoples endowed with full suffrage and the lack of such responsiveness in the nations where manhood is not synonymous with political responsibility and power.

If the men of New York refuse women the vote, what is the suffragist then to think of the endowment for which he makes so many claims? Believing in suffrage himself, how can he reconcile himself to a contrary verdict on the part of a majority of his peers? There need be no question of reconcilement. All the suffragist can say is that the process in which he has faith is not an automatic process, and so long as propaganda is expensive and human imagination rigid and sex dependence a social fact, so long will the instrument of the vote be imperfect. The cost of the imperfection may be greater, however, than the inflexible male voter cares to think. The suffrage policy in this campaign has been impeccable in its propriety. The picketing policy has been repudiated. The war has been supported in every detail. The vast majority of the women have taken no bitter-end attitude or lost their sense of proportion in any other respect. But with overwhelming proof that the political infantility of their sex is resented by women, as witnessed by the monster petition signed by over a million New York women, the male voters must face the possibility of widening an unhappy breach between themselves and women now politically self-conscious. To deny full political associations to women, to increase the belief that right cannot be obtained except by force, to darken the horizon of working women everywhere, to renew the prejudices that make Chinese foot-binding so applicable a symbol—this cannot be done with impunity at the present hour.

Nothing can stop the agitation for woman suffrage but the granting of woman suffrage. Better than enfranchisement by agitation, however, is enfranchisement by coöperation. The men of New York should coöperate with the women of New York in removing this anomaly—the greatest anomaly without a single exception in any state calling itself democratic.

As to Future Liberty Loans

THE Second Liberty Loan has proved a success. The billions required have been raised, and in large part they have been raised among persons of modest means. Immense energy has been put forth by the government and by private individuals working under the spur of patriotism, to secure the widest possible subscriptions to the loan. The bankers have given untiring service, gratis; indeed, there is scarcely a bank in the country that has not pushed the loan at a sacrifice to its own immediate interest. The newspapers have given free an enormous amount of advertising space not easily dispensed with in times when the whole publishing industry is hard hit by high costs. Innumerable corporations have rendered valuable aid to the loan through pressure exerted upon their employees. An incredible number of organizations and individuals have constituted themselves as missionaries for the loan. It has been estimated that as many as two million persons have taken part in the campaign.

All this expenditure of energy has been to the good, irrespective of its fruits, which have indeed been notable. The two loan campaigns have served to bring home the seriousness of our international task to hundreds of thousands who might otherwise have remained apathetic. It has given tangible work for their country to many who needed a useful avenue for emotions too valuable to be wasted in vain boastings about their country's power or in impotent ragings against distant foes. Among the two million who worked for the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG,
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

loan there must have been thousands who failed to persuade a single person to subscribe. Their efforts were still not wasted. Their labors made better citizens of them, and we need better citizens, now of all times.

It does not follow, however, that we can profitably employ the same methods in all the loans that are to come. In the course of the next fifteen months—if the war continues—we shall need to raise six loans comparable in magnitude to the two we have already raised. In those fifteen months we shall be compelled to find as much money for war-making as the German government has raised from the outbreak of hostilities to the present day. We are a much richer people, but a people far more expensive to maintain. The loans that are to come can only be taken up through the exercise by the whole people of a degree of thrift quite alien to our traditional mode of living. Will campaigns of publicity, seconded by the efforts of volunteer workers, retain their freshness of appeal to the public? Or will more and more citizens say to themselves: "We subscribed to the last loan, and the one before. Let those who shirked the earlier loan carry the obligation of this one."

As the war progresses we shall become more and more a unified people; lukewarmness toward the war will give way to all but universal support of it. But this very fact will rob an emotional loan campaign of one of its chief levers: the fear of each person solicited that refusal to subscribe may be set down to pacifism, or lack of patriotism. When we are all pro-war—except for a scattering of persons whose anti-war position is well defined—we shall each interpret the requirements of patriotism for himself. The analogous case of volunteering for military service in war is illuminating. Men rush to enlist at the first call. Succeeding calls fall upon more and more reluctant ears. Men of military age come to fear less and less the taunt of cowardice or lack of patriotism. The inducements for volunteering must be raised; and in the end resort must be had to conscription.

It is doubtless with a view to future issues that some of our highest officials have been recently hinting that we shall resort to conscription of wealth if subscriptions fail to flow in at a satisfactory rate. Of course we shall. America is too deeply in earnest about this war to permit herself to be lamed in her prosecution of it by the refusal of some of her citizens to provide the resources it is within their power to provide. But before we resort to a conscription that means anything more than a levying of the heaviest taxes that can be collected without industrial disorganization, we ought to see what systematic, continuous efforts at cultivating thrift may do for us.

What such systematic effort is capable of achieving is illustrated by the brilliant success of the life insurance companies. Most men know that they need insurance. Most men know that it is their moral duty to insure their lives. But suppose that there were no active army of life insurance agents scattered over the country, but only public offices to which men might resort when they felt that they wanted insurance, *now*. How well might we expect the volume of insurance to compare with that which is now outstanding? If we suggested that so many as one-tenth of those now insured would have insured themselves in such public offices, we should expose ourselves to the scorn of all who know anything about the life insurance business. The life insurance companies have a commodity to sell that is admitted by practically all to be worth buying. It is nevertheless not a commodity that will sell itself. Nothing but the most expert and most determined business methods can induce the average man to enter upon a contract involving the curtailment of his means of present enjoyment even in the fulfilment of the weightiest of private obligations.

In its bonds the government has a commodity to sell that makes an even more universal appeal than the life-insurance contract can make. The obligation of making provision for the future is in this case reinforced by the obligation of patriotism. But good as the commodity is, it cannot in the long run be expected to sell itself, at least to the persons whose subscriptions are most needed, and in volume commensurate with the national requirements. Nothing but expert and persistent salesmanship can be surely counted on to sell the bonds.

But expert salesmanship, continuously active, is not to be had gratis, and we prefer to raise our public loans without deductions on account of cost. By all means, let us avail ourselves of gratuitous services so far as possible. We must bear in mind, however, that gratuitous service often comes high. If the next loan, or the next, flags too seriously, we may well be compelled to raise the rate of interest. The cost of a formidable selling force would be light as compared with the cost of an additional half of one per cent on a debt of fifteen billions.

Granting the desirability of a competent selling machinery, would it not be impossible to improvise it in time to meet the current need? We have in the life insurance business a network of agencies that permeates the whole country. Almost every man who has any free income at all is known to the agents of the commercial companies or the officers of the fraternal orders. We could convert the whole system to our national use, if we offered reasonable compensation. The enterprise of na-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional borrowings, to be sure, is too gigantic to remain merely an incidental activity of even so powerful a system as the insurance business represents. But we could use the insurance agencies as at least a skeleton file for our army of national thrift.

Such machinery for mobilizing our potential saving power is needed not only for the period of the war, but for the period of reconstruction as well. The war has opened our eyes to the need of colossal amounts of capital to assure our food supply, to develop our production of raw materials, to utilize our sources of power, to improve our means of transportation, and above all to abate the evils of undernourishment and improper housing that are now seen to have played such sad havoc with the stamina of much of our population. Colossal amounts of capital will also be needed for the restoration of the lands ravaged by war. Furthermore, with an auspicious peace, we may look for a tremendous impulse toward the development of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and consequently a heavy drain upon the renewing capital supply of the world. By virtue of our incomparable productive power we shall be in a position to play an important part in extending the confines of industrial civilization, if we will but save. And saving will become a common virtue among us only when we have such an institutional machinery as the needs of war press us to create for ourselves.

The Farmer and the War

MANY newspapers and public speakers are attacking the organization of northwestern farmers known as the Nonpartisan League. They say that the League, although in its program professing allegiance to the government, really aims at interfering as ingeniously and stealthily as possible with the work of accomplishing our national purposes in this war. As evidence that such is the League's aim its critics call attention to its recent convention at St. Paul, where Senator La Follette delivered the speech which has since called for a Congressional investigation. A second charge, made later than the first, is that the League is trying to discourage the growth of a good war spirit among its members by seeking an alliance with the I. W. W. We believe there is no truth in the rumors of such an alliance. They were chiefly the result of a warning issued by the farmer governor of North Dakota against possible resort to mob violence. He feared the sort of outbreak which occurred at Bisbee, Arizona, and in form and purpose his warning did not differ greatly from that which President Wilson telegraphed to Bisbee. And an alliance between the League and the I. W. W. is not only unproved. It is also highly improbable. Wheat will have to sell for a great deal less than two dollars a bushel before its owner turns into a champion of sabotage.

How about the more general charge—that the leaders of the League are not encouraging their followers to take a greater part in war activities than the bare minimum that the law compels them to take? This charge is in our judgment substantially true. In seeking remedies for such a state of things it is necessary to understand its cause. Before the United States entered the war the farmers of the northwest were as strongly disposed to keep out of it as any other one group in the country. Some of them were by nationality opposed to the success of the Allies. All were remote from the centres of pro-Ally opinion in the United States. They willingly and literally held the opinion that the war was no concern of ours. These northwestern farmers were deeply concerned about something very different, namely, the conditions which led to the organization and growth of the Nonpartisan League, elsewhere described in this issue.

The Nonpartisan League was born because the northwestern farmer believed that interlocking rings of Big Business and Middlemen were tricking him out of the opportunity, not to make new profits, but to pocket those profits which were undeniably his due. Political control as a remedy for this situation was being successfully promoted, was already well under way, when we entered the war. Shrewd and persistent pointing to the shortcomings of an exclusively private system of distribution had swept practically an entire farmers' ticket into control of the state of North Dakota. The League, when the war broke, was gaining several hundred new members every week in Minnesota, South Dakota, Montana and other states where coöperative buying and selling had prepared the way for a political alliance. When the United States entered the war one of the first facts noticed by the northwestern farmer was that Big Business and the Middleman, as he knew them at his door, seemed to be glad that war had come. He asked himself why, and his answer, ignoring those reasons for approving the war which were decisive with many Americans to whom war will bring loss of life or loss of property, fastened upon the one motive which had always been, in his conception of Big Business and the Middlemen, the key to their conduct. In the eyes of the northwestern farmer the war might mean this, that or the other, but the one thing it certainly meant was increased opportunities for profiteering.

His obsession was strengthened by the manner in which the northwestern communities have been organized for war. It was natural that an emergency structure should build, not around the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

isolated farmer, but around the industrial captain whose leadership is almost the only sort that exists locally, around the grain-buyer, the banker, the miller in whom the farmer saw his economic and political opponents, more to be feared than any distant autocracy. A grain-buyer, suspected of using a short scale, declares that this is a war for universal participation in the world's good things. Is it strange that the farmer, hearing this, should be cynical? Liberty bonds have not the best chance of being taken quickly when their salesman is a local banker suspected of having done his best to block the enactment of a state rural credits law.

League leaders are so nearly in agreement with this opinion that a sustained attack upon profiteering has been the League's dominant note in the last six months. Profiteering is the text used by the League's publications, by its president, by its new representative in Congress. It has failed to distinguish between the uses to which profiteers must not be allowed to put the war and the use which must be made of wealth and of the ablest industrial leaders in any effective war organization. The League's weekly journal has, for instance, roused distrust in many thousands of farmers by the implications of its belief that "Food Administrator Hoover has surrounded himself with a number of Chamber of Commerce men and other Big Business representatives . . . interested in discrediting food control." The League, to be sure, has felt that developments forced it to lose much of its initial confidence in the food administration; but surely it would have been in a sounder position, and its chances of usefulness would have been immensely better, if it had been able to bear in mind the futility of attempting any food control whatever, given the agencies and methods of distribution now in existence, without the first-hand use of great business institutions. So, too, with profiteering. Attacks upon an individual who turns his country's need into excess profits are not evidence of disloyalty; but an attack which fails to recognize what would happen to the American offensive if there should be immediate and literal conscription not of profits but of wealth, is evidence of blind leadership.

In not fully accepting their chances for leadership the men at the head of the Nonpartisan League seem to be suffering from blindness. The war offered them an exceptional opportunity. The League was the one organization which might have shown the tremendous value of organization in rallying farmers to the government's support. Had it succeeded in doing this it would have gained substantial prestige in national politics and a hearing for its suggestions as to the conduct of the war. It might have offered to take the lead in supplying the government with systematized data on production and marketing conditions through all the Northwest, in establishing an emergency interstate farm-labor bureau, in undertaking—with federal aid—those local discussions of war aims which are so necessary among the farmers.

Is there any way of changing the League leaders' minds, so that the League may be prevented from becoming a merely obstructive body, so that it may help in the accomplishment of national aims without abandoning its own? One possible way is to show members of the League that these two sets of aims are not opposed. When the war came it found the League seeking to substitute the state for the individual as a means of distribution. The northwestern farmers are trying to have this substitution made now, while the war is going on. They believe the war will be more effectively conducted if the substitution takes place. A declaration from some influential representative of the government, assuring the farmers that they are free and welcome to carry on this part of their propaganda, that their suggestions of changes in the conduct of the war will be considered, would do much to lessen the feeling, now spreading and deepening throughout the Northwest, that the farmers are not to have a hearing while the war lasts.

What the northwestern farmer is now being told, day after day by his political and economic opponents at home, is that every kind of criticism and every kind of dissent are to be lumped together and called disloyalty. What he needs to be told is that the federal government is more discriminating. He knows that charges are often brought against him by men who may be loyal, but whose motive for calling him disloyal is not loyalty but self-interest. He needs to know that the government is equally aware of this fact.

The New
REPUBLIC
A Journal of Opinion

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1917, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE REPUBLIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 421 WEST TWENTY-FIRST STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, ROBERT HALLOWELL, TREASURER.

EDITORS
HERBERT CROLY FRANCIS HACKETT
PHILIP LITTELL ALVIN JOHNSON
GEORGE SOULE—Assistant Editor
CHARLES MERZ, Washington Representative

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION FIFTY-TWO ISSUES, FOUR DOLLARS IN ADVANCE. SINGLE COPIES TEN CENTS. CANADIAN SUBSCRIPTION FOUR DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE POSTAL UNION, FIVE DOLLARS PER YEAR IN ADVANCE: REMITTANCE TO BE MADE BY INTERNATIONAL POSTAL MONEY ORDER.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER, NOVEMBER 6, 1914, AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y., UNDER THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The One Thing Needful

I

AT Washington one comes back always to the one thing needful, in the matter of conducting the war with the greatest possible dispatch. People make many suggestions. They suggest this trick and that trick. They suggest this cunning detail and that cunning detail. In the end it all washes out once more into the one thing needful. This was so last May. It was so last August. It is so now. Nothing else, relatively, is worth talking about. Or, rather, everything else of any high importance, when talked about, turns out finally to be this.

We talk now about the transfer of ships from the South American routes, from the Central American routes, from the West Indian routes, from the coastwise routes, from the Pacific routes, to the routes across the Atlantic. Such transfers must be made, heavily. When we take a ship already in a trans-Atlantic route going to a belligerent country and give it to the Army Department, we manifestly are doing little or nothing to promote the war. We may even be retarding the war. To promote the war with a genuine effectiveness we must draw on ships from other routes or else on new ships.

Among new ships we may count the ships now ours that were once German or Austrian. From those ships we have assigned a small amount of tonnage to the Russians, a small amount to the French, a small amount to the Italians and a very large amount, naturally, to ourselves. But the ships once German and once Austrian are not enough. And the ships coming off the stocks are not enough. From such ships we have just agreed to assign some 80,000 tons to the French. We are warmed to the heart with the thought of the help we are giving them. It is an illusory warmth. Those ships were building on French account and on British account, for French service and for British service. If we had not commandeered them on the stocks, we should not now have the pleasure of releasing them. If we had never come into the war at all, they would have gone, when finished, into a trans-Atlantic route, just exactly as they are going now. And the same remark may be made about a very considerable percentage of all the tonnage that will be launched from our yards between now and the first of next March. When we take ex-British and ex-French ships, which we have commandeered on the stocks, and put them on trans-Atlantic routes, whether in the service of the French or in the service of ourselves, we are merely putting them where they would have been put anyway. Our only bona fide contributions to the trans-Atlantic routes, from among fresh-built ships, are clearly, hopelessly clearly, those that we are building on our own account in the course of our own shipbuilding program; and they, we know, and all the world knows, are not enough, if next spring's drive is to have a vigorous American meaning.

Accordingly, admittedly, the transfers of existing American ships from other routes to trans-Atlantic routes must be numerous, must be drastic. Shipowners, shippers, importers, exporters, consumers, might as well know it and make up their minds to it and adjust their affairs and their appetites in harmony with it. If England, enormously more dependent on imports than we are, has been able, as Mr. Grasty informs the New York Times, to reduce its imports from an annual total of 58,000,000 tons to an annual total of 33,000,000 tons, we surely may hope that we shall be able to effect a radical reduction of the tonnage of commodities entering this richly resourced country of ours. In any case, whether we think we can or not, we must; and the talk now current in the War Department and in the Navy Department and in the Shipping Board is pretty good evidence that we will. They have already taken a considerable number of our ships from the coastwise trade and from the exports-and-imports trade for the direct European war trade; and they are preparing to take many more; and the whole subject of the mobilization of our merchant fleet and of the adjustment of our exports-and-imports trade is at a crisis inevitable since April 6th. Let us observe the steps by which we have prepared to meet it.

The first step was to "requisition" all our merchant ships of ocean-going value and get them under the immediate continuous control of the Shipping Board. It was not till June 30th that this "requisitioning" was authorized formally by act of Congress. It was not till October 15th that it was accomplished by act of the Shipping Board. Some people might think that a certain tardiness was here discernible; but, as a Frenchman in Washington happily remarked the other day, there is no use crying over milk that has passed under the bridge. The Shipping Board has now "requisitioned" all American steamers of 2,500 deadweight tons and more; and it seems likely to extend its control downward after a while from the 2,500-ton line to the 1,500-ton line; and all these steam-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers will hereafter be operated, as a general rule, under an arrangement which leaves the owners still in the position of owners but which puts the Shipping Board in the position of charterer, of lessee, of controller.

One might conclude, then, that Mr. Hurley, as Chairman of the Shipping Board, is the person, the one person, to decide whether or not a certain ship shall be transferred from carrying sewing-machines and coffee in the South American trade to carrying steel and copper in the trade to Europe. And Mr. Hurley is not without certain sound diplomatic qualifications for that diplomatically very difficult task. He is, most fortunately, a man who can see both sides of most things. He is a business man; he has been acquainted with that far from radical organization, the Illinois Manufacturers' Association; and yet I have heard him tell people who were denouncing trade-unionism for "un-American" behavior that in his experience as Chairman of the Shipping Board the patriotism of the trade-unionists and the patriotism of the employers were "fifty-fifty and no choice." He has not fallen a victim to the current commercial jingo superstition which sees "disloyalty" in every strike. This quality of level-headedness and even-handedness he has shown in other relations, too. He has kept the peace, for instance, with Admiral Capps. Mr. Hurley is a business man of the instant, instinctive, type. Admiral Capps is a naval man of the most strictly trained and formulated type, who leaves nothing dottable undotted and nothing crossable uncrossed in the contracts, the perfect contracts, that go over his desk. Mr. Hurley and Admiral Capps are perhaps the grandest antithesis that even that excellent rhetorician Woodrow Wilson ever contrived. Yet, most creditably to both, they seem to survive together.

Mr. Hurley, further, now has among his subordinates a quite competent knowledge of the character and location and possible utility of all and each of our merchant ships. Under the hand of a most urgent young man by the name of Ewing, who used to be in the railway business and who is now suddenly transformed into a shipping magnate, there has been assembled a great array of filing-cabinets, card catalogues, indices, letters, telegrams, blue prints, statistics, data, and the like, up to the minute, composing together a complete picture of the present doings of our merchant marine in the world's ports and in the world's trade-lanes, in loadings and carryings of nitrate and wool and coal and cocoa and bananas and sugar and chrome and manganese and passengers and anything and everything else. When the War Department wants another ship (and it always wants another ship) young Mr. Ewing plunges into his data and drags that ship out from a trade here or from a trade there and knows pretty well just what he is doing because he has built a thorough apparatus for doing it. His is one of the marvelously extemporized business machines which we owe, in certain sections and sub-sections of our departments, to our new business recruits.

But the withdrawing of ships from their present routes is not a matter which is only a shipping matter. It is also an exports-and-imports matter, an international trade strategy matter. What has the Shipping Board to do with international trade strategy? This question has been answered in a manner in which, again, some people might think that a certain tardiness is discernible.

On June 15th, in the "Espionage" Act, Congress authorized the President to exercise a certain control over exports. On August 21st the President confided this control to the "Exports Administrative Board," established for the special purpose of exercising it. But it is impossible to imagine an effective and useful control of exports, in any particular, unless it is conducted in harmony with a control of imports. Mr. Hoover, for instance, wishes to import cocoanut oil, palm oil and soya bean oil, to serve as a supplement and as a substitute for our native cooking fats. If we are going to import such things in increased quantities, we must, for that reason alone, import certain other things in decreased quantities, and we must then send exports, in payment for our imports, to the places, if we can, from which our imports are actually coming. Therefore a control of imports, simultaneously and concertedly with a control of exports, was inevitable, and it arrived, exactly six months after our declaration of war, on October 6th, in the "Trading with the Enemy" Act. Pursuant to that act, on October 12th, the President established a "War Trade Board," which took over the duties of the "Exports Administrative Board" and which is now our one central authority for all licensing, actual and prospective, of exports and imports both, and which is therefore bound to be our one compelling center of information and of final expert guidance with regard to our overseas trade.

Here, then, are two bodies which must work in harmony in the mobilizing of our merchant fleet and in the adjusting of our commerce. Who is it that the Shipping Board reports to? The President. Who is it that the War Trade Board reports to? It represents, in theory, in its six members, six departments of government: state, agriculture, commerce, treasury, shipping and food. Having six masters, it will, in practice, have none, short of the President. It can justly be regarded as one more department, outside the cabinet departments,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reporting to the President alone. When therefore the Shipping Board has one policy and the War Trade Board has another policy (a case which is certain to occur, because it occurs continuously between every two departments having anything to do with each other), the conflict will get settled only in one of the two ways in such cases now established and provided. One: it will drag on and on, without the President, through telephone conversations and luncheons and dinners and improvised conferences between the departments concerned, until a state of unanimous concessive consent is reached. Two: it will drag itself in pieces, in an ex parte statement by one combatant and in an ex parte statement from the other combatant, to the White House. Most people do not resort to the second way until they have tried the first for a very long time. They naturally do not want to "bother the President." The President therefore often gets blamed for delays of which he has no knowledge. The departments also get blamed. But what can they do? They have their choice between "bothering the President" and pursuing that sum and climax of all administrative difficulty and dilatoriness—unanimous concessive inter-departmental consent. Administratively it is precisely what the old Diet of Poland used to be legislatively. The "liberum veto" of one department can stalemate a whole game of action.

But the Shipping Board and the War Trade Board are not the only departments concerned in the matter now before us. There is also the Navy Department, which wants many ships, for auxiliary purposes; and there is also the War Department, which wants more and more ships for its army in France. The War Department, most especially, must be considered. The ship that Mr. Hurley is going to transfer from tropical waters to the waters of the northern Atlantic, shall it simply go into the carrying of war supplies to the war-bound populations of France or Italy or shall it be commandeered to the special immediate war aims of the American War Department? Can Mr. Hurley decide this question? Can Mr. Vance McCormick, head of the War Trade Board? Can Mr. Baker? Mr. Baker, like every Secretary of War in the world, must regard the needs of his army as being supremely pressing. History will not blame him if we lose our sewing-machine trade with the Brazilians. History will most distinctly blame him if his army is not clothed and fed and munitioned to the last boot and the last dried pea and the last shell. The disposition of that ship will require a unanimous consent in which Mr. Baker's voice must be given a large range and in which the subject of the resources of our merchant fleet and the subject of our present and future overseas trade and the subject of our military efforts in Europe must reach a combined consideration and a maritime, commercial, military strategic balance. There is no body of men constituted to strike that balance. There is no body of men responsible for striking it wrongly or for striking it too late. And even if Mr. Baker and Mr. Vance McCormick and Mr. Hurley should set themselves up, of their own motion, to be a Board, meeting daily, to strike it and to take the responsibility for striking it, they could not do it, because it involves considerations far beyond even their combined proper authority. That ship, which is to be transferred, should it not be assigned to the French instead of to Mr. Baker? Or to the Italians? Here tremendous questions emerge, questions transcending all questions maritime or commercial or military, questions in the realm of the highest international political world-settlement policy.

Is it surprising, then, that the French did not succeed in getting us to assign to them that 80,000 tons of new shipping and that they did not succeed in striking a bargain with us for giving us a lot of their existing sailing tonnage in just exchange for a half-lot of our existing steaming tonnage till after many weeks of running from one authority to another authority in Washington and till after their one million tons of stranded materials on the American shore had become a staple topic of dinner-table conversation throughout Washington, and till after cablegrams, actually, had been received from American military men and American naval men on the other side of the Atlantic pleading for six tugs or something for the hard pressed warriors of the French Republic? It is not too much to say that the representations of the French on this subject, candid representations, perfectly legitimate representations, had reached almost a world-wide scope in the ears of American administrators and politicians and journalists and military and naval personages before the moment of decision came. The interval between the moment of first representations and the moment of final orders was really scandalous. Let us assume that the final orders were right. They were reached in weeks when all the facts were known in days. Yet where is the incompetency of any individual? Nowhere. Is it for Mr. Hurley to be ready off-hand to determine the partition of war effort between France and Italy and the United States? Is it for Mr. Baker? Is it for any other departmental head? Certainly not. Therefore it passed through a long stage of amicable jostling between departmental heads and then it passed through another long stage of attempted appeals, from all conceivable quarters, to the much harassed occupant of the White House and then it got settled either by a belated verdict

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the White House or by a desperate impulse from Mr. Hurley or by a sort of general tired "Oh-let-them-have-that-80,000-tons" feeling, or, more realistically, by an intricate incalculable combination of those three natural developments.

In this way we can win the war. In this way we cannot win the war with a maximum of speed and a minimum of killed and mangled. Therefore people say: "In order to do every day's work on that day and not several weeks later, let us have a Grand Priority Board, which shall determine a policy in tonnage and lay it down for everybody." Very good. Let us go on to see what such a Grand Priority Board would mean. It would mean nothing but the thing long seen as the one thing needful.

WILLIAM HARD.

Degas and Draughtsmanship

DEGAS is dead, leaving a reputation as the greatest draughtsman of his time. The essential facts concerning him are familiar. Every one interested in recent art knows, either in the originals or in reproductions, his gripping studies of washerwomen, ballet dancers and race horses. The ingenious originality of his compositions is a common theme. Eulogy has been exhausted in the effort to express the fulness of the critic's admiration for his mastery of form and movement. He was the first of his group to gain recognition, the first whose pictures were bought by the conservative amateur, and the first whose prices rocketed. He had for some time before his death kept apart from the world, which heard now and then tales of his eccentric ways, of his attic habitation, and which received with joy an occasional fresh specimen of his brilliant and biting wit. He had become almost legendary in Paris, though he was still occasionally seen at an exhibition, peering with failing eyes at some picture with which he wanted to make or renew acquaintance. So completely has the name of Degas been associated with the notion of perfect mastery of drawing that a discussion of his work, on the non-illustrative side, may be tantamount to a discussion of drawing.

"Good drawing" may mean, and habitually does mean, very different things to different people. To one, or rather to most, it means accurate rendition of the facts that the draughtsman has in mind. To another it means successful expression of no matter what, through the medium of line. To a third it means the successfully achieved presentation of a form, irrespective of the medium through which this is accomplished. In this sense drawing is good in so far as a form that has any qualities of interest is effectually presented to view. This would mean that drawing is really equivalent to the rendering of form. It was inevitable that this last sense should have become important in our day, since one of the specific characters of modern painting results from the intention to build up the form with color spots, which are developed in such a manner as to constitute contours by the meeting of their edges rather than to start with fixed contours which are then filled in with color. The distortions that are found in painters like Cézanne and Matisse did not grow out of inability to draw an academic nude, but were rather the result of an effort to make the contours of their color patches fall into the places where their pictorial arrangements required them. They attempted to give to all the pictorial elements as much substantiality of form as they could achieve, and to the whole picture as much arrangement and solid structure as lay within their powers.

If something of resemblance to natural forms was lost, it was a misfortune that they could not help. They had to make the sacrifice somewhere, and considered accurate resemblance less important than pictorial organization. They were very solicitous of good drawing, and had no reason to object to Ingres's famous statement that drawing is the probity of art, though in their adhesion to the formula they would have had in mind something rather different from what was meant by the original author. In order to be a great draughtsman today it is not necessary that one should have exceptional skill with pen or pencil. The brush is a very sufficient instrument. Drawing is, then, essentially the art of constructing a painting, and is the means through which all the resultant qualities, for which critics hunt adjectives, are made effective. However, so much of the old associations still cling to the word that we do not commonly apply it to a geometrical pattern, though we might to one that showed a conspicuous arabesque. There is, none the less, no real point of separation between these.

The obvious superiority of Degas over his contemporaries lay in his masterly knowledge of the figure and of the means through which its movements could be expressed. His race horses have a tension and strain as different as possible from the race horses of his predecessors, and his ballet girls float and leap and gyrate marvelously. And when they are standing or bending to tie their shoes, or are practising at the bar, they are rendered with an expressive vigor in the stretch or relaxation of limbs that is unique. Nor is there less of insight into the composition as a whole, which is most exquisitely adjusted to the filling of the space. A scene is naturalistically treated, and yet is made to render a new arrangement by the felicity of its placings.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Considering all this perfection, it may seem strange that a number of people, who once shared the popular estimate of Degas as the draughtsman par excellence of recent art, should have come in the course of time to the conclusion that they had over-estimated him, and should have come to believe that though his drawing is admirable, it none the less is not finally great; that the drawing of Renoir and Cézanne, perhaps of Manet also (which because it was not predominantly linear was according to an older practice hardly thought of as drawing), is ultimately a greater thing because, though less competent in various ways, it excels his in producing the impression of that quality which is most important of all. Now drawing is, in the last resort, neither good nor bad, except as it communicates qualities which are of interest, and it will be, perhaps, worth while trying to point out what is this most important of all qualities.

It is one of the old commonplaces of criticism to insist on the importance of unity in a work of art, and for that matter this applies to criticism outside the work of art as well. Nothing is more damning than inconsistency, and many a man is compelled to stick to his old opinions, although, be it said by the way, a profounder conception of consistency would demand that his opinions change as he grows to fresh experience. Unity of conduct is required, and we question the honesty and sincerity of him whose conduct shows fissures of discontinuity. We find that thing to be artificial which is broken in its transitions, which lacks either the constancy of the unchanging or the free fluidity of change, but which instead goes from one state to another as though it were prearranged. In respect of some things of the kind we all become quite expert, as in detecting signs of insincerity and other phases of expression in the faces of people, and it is especially one of the fields in which women's "intuition" is particularly active.

An analogous thing takes place among those people who are much concerned, perhaps too much concerned, with art. They develop extreme sensitiveness with regard to qualities which the average person takes in the gross. All of us bring to the perception of anything that we attend to, a predisposition to see it in a certain way; and one most common predisposition tends towards the acceptance of the adequacy of the inadequate. We not only recognize a shapeless brown spot in a green field as an indubitable cow, but we also recognize a rough diagram as a complete representation until we have learned better. Tom Sawyer's little friend Becky Thatcher is delighted with his drawing and says ecstatically "That's a beautiful man," although the drawing textually consisted of a few rough indications of the primary divisions of a man's body. With habit, however, we shed more and more of this amiable baggage of acquiescence and become more and more critical of what the artist offers, exactly as in the fields outside of art we are less and less readily, as our experience grows, taken in by substitutes for the real thing. The time comes when only the exceptional things will pass muster, those in which coherence between what is promised and what is given is, in respect of some essential quality, infrangible.

In drawing, the expression of movement, of volume, of mass, the ordering of a surface are important matters, and in all these things Degas excels, but many of us find that he is not, as we once thought, supreme. We no longer find in them that decisive unity of expression which resists the most disinterested examination. I do not find in him in respect of any quality what I find in all the unequivocally great artists in respect of their specific virtues: a self-existence in respect of that quality that makes me feel that I need add nothing to them, need not meet them half way or quarter way, in order to receive the full value of their gifts. Psychologically, this is of course not true, one must bring the result of old experience to the new encounter, but one can bring it maximally purified just as the man of science tries to see the object "as it really is."

It may be asked why in the case of the work of art we should attempt this. The average man who is fond of art can find a multitude of objects that satisfy him where the connoisseur finds hardly one. It can be doubtfully claimed that the satisfaction of the latter is greater or of finer quality. The ratios probably remain approximately constant. As the ordinary thing is to the average man, so is the fine thing to the superior person. He has his quantitative loss for his pains. He must be content to put his losses to the credit of the spirit that struggles upward and that seeks the truth although the effort bring no other profit.

A word must be added as to differences of opinion among the wise. There are many who would contest what has been said of Degas's inferiority, and the humble that court authority may be perplexed. But there is no reason why an authoritative opinion should be possible except where the case is so clear that all experienced people agree. Keen students of men dispute endlessly about the qualities of their acquaintances, about their sincerity frequently, and as I tried to show above the difficulty is the same in both cases: the sensitive detection of perfect coherence. Art has intrinsic value only as an object of experience not as the subject of opinion, so that there is no pressing need that any opinion should be right.

LEO STEIN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Political Revolt in the Northwest

I. Why the Farmers Organized

THE National Nonpartisan League, spreading swiftly through the Northwest in successful organization of the farmers, is less the sign of a new agrarian movement than of a political shift which threatens the local hold of the two established parties. The League is in full possession of North Dakota. It has sent its first member to Congress. It is organizing in ten western agricultural states. In half of them, probably, it has already tied up one vote in five so securely that the Democratic and Republican parties will not be able to loosen it in the next election, even on the after-the-war tariff issue. Politically, at least, the League cannot be put in a class with the early beginnings of the Populist and the Granger movements. It has been extraordinarily successful, not through agitation and demagogy, but because it has in a matter of fact manner sized up its problems and planned for their solution.

Those problems, as the farmers see them, are exclusively problems in distribution. There is nothing wrong with the producer and the consumer. Left to themselves they would have no difficulty in striking a balance. But an interloper—Big Business—has stepped in between. By his manipulation of dockage and grading and prices he extorts a profit at both ends, without making any discoverable contribution of his own. For the northwestern farmer Big Business is specifically the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, which is no chamber of commerce at all, but a grain exchange like the Chicago Board of Trade.

In North Dakota, where the Nonpartisan League had its start, the argument of the farmers runs in this way: The State Agricultural College has proved that the lighter wheat, graded by the millers as no better than " feed wheat," makes in fact quite as good flour as the No. 1 Northern which brings more than twice as high a price. The buyers assert that often this is because wheat comes into the elevators wet; when it has dried it deserves a higher grade, and price, than it had before. All the more reason, the farmers say, why it should be graded on its flour-producing qualities, rather than on a temporarily inferior condition. Moreover, the buyers do not pay for the " dockage "—screenings, dirt, etc.—but they retain it, and when it has been collected and sorted and parceled out here and there, its value mounts high enough to be measured in millions, each year. Dockage is the second grievance. And what chance is there of raising wheat so profitably that the dockage will not matter—when money for financing farm improvements is away beyond reach? The farmers have had to pay ten per cent interest, and then discount their notes. Finally, there is the great evil of price manipulation. The farmer has been impressed by the regularity with which the prices of wheat move downward when he is preparing to sell, and upward within a short time after the transfer has been made. No regularity so certain, he concludes, could be caused by anything but the legal thieving schemes of the grain exchanges.

The accuracy of what the Agricultural College has to say about grading; the actual yearly loss in dockage; the extent to which farm losses are the result of poor methods of cultivation rather than of handicaps in distribution—such queries are in fact not relevant to the growth of the Nonpartisan League. For events have proved that many thousands of farmers find in the evils of a wholly private system of distribution the reason why more than fifty per cent of the farms in North Dakota are mortgaged—and why, between the two last censuses, farm tenantry increased at a more rapid rate in North Dakota than in any other state in the country. Their estimate of what a private system of distribution has cost them, in entirely undeserved profits, is a hundred and fifteen millions annually. And they have seen no relief ahead until the state steps in as distributor. The farmers, to be sure, might play that part themselves. But warehouses and elevators cost a great deal of money, and bond issues on a large scale could scarcely be swung by a class which contains few members with capital to invest. The state, however, could promote any number of bond issues with no trouble at all, and be paid in the returns of the enterprise. Is there not, as a rule, profit in such ventures as public-owned lighting plants and street railways?

If the farmers had come no more definitely to the problems they saw before them than to attack the middleman and give a general indorsement to the principle of public control over distribution, the present movement in the Northwest would have had no more immediate success than earlier agrarian movements had. The attack, in this instance, was more direct. It was launched when the North Dakota legislature failed for the second time to act upon the constitutional amendment which authorized state terminal elevators and which had

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

twice been passed by an eighty per cent vote of the people. That failure suggested an opportunity to A. C. Townley, a resident of the state who had been studying the position of the farmer because he himself had found it an unprofitable one. With several colleagues, who were later to direct the activities of the League, he blocked out a plan to bring the farmer economic freedom. Ultimately this brief became the program of the League. It included, of course, state operation of elevators and warehouses, and state standardization of grading methods. Those were the points immediately at issue. But there was no clear difference between state-owned elevators and state-owned packing plants—and state packing plants were added. Moreover, if the state was to carry the farmer up to the point where his grain was ready to be changed into flour, why should the full possibilities of collective ownership be disregarded? So plans were stretched to include state-owned flour-mills. State hail insurance, exemption of farm improvements from taxation, and a state rural credits system completed the platform. An uninviting program, except for the farmer? "We are not afraid of class legislation" is the explanation the farmers give.

The fact is that this program gave comfort to the opposition. It was too impossible a program. Until its authors had annexed the entire legislative, executive and judicial machinery of the state, their smallest object would fail and their leadership remain insecure. No one, however, appreciated the situation more keenly than Townley and those who were associated with him. Complete control of the state was what they set out to accomplish. For once a farmers' movement was to waste no time in setting up a secret ritual or providing honorary degrees for its members, but to go frankly and directly into politics. The men who planned this attack were fortunate in being able to profit from earlier attempts at organization. In North Dakota there existed three farmers' societies: the Farmers' Educational and Coöperative Union, the National Grange and the American Society of Equity. All three had blocked out the way for the new League by instructing the farmers in the rudiments of organization and familiarizing them at first hand with the economic problems which the League was to tackle politically.

Of the factors that aided the new movement in getting under way in North Dakota, these coöperative societies probably helped most. Only here and there a jealous or disgruntled leader of the old order refused to accept the new. The rapid growth of the League was also aided by the versatility which its leaders showed in their campaigning. Cartoonists, a hundred small automobiles, and several capable editorial writers—accumulated gradually as more and more members paid their dues—were manipulated to keep unforgettably before the farmer the fact that he must use his ballot not for "a full dinner-pail" or "Thomas Jefferson" or "the protection of American industry," but for a series of very definite and obviously profitable economic innovations. The indorsement of the State Federation of Labor helped the League, too, when it came, though more by implication than directly—since the labor vote of North Dakota is almost negligible. Finally, the opposition party was of great assistance. For it adopted negative tactics when only some promising alternative could have headed off the support which the League's popular and unconventional method of campaigning was attracting. It spent its strength in attacks upon individual leaders of the League, when it might better have been trying to present in intelligible terms the case against state control; it organized opposition "leagues" with such patent hypocrisy that it delivered many of its own sympathizers over to the farmers. The force of all factors was irresistible. Within eighteen months of the time it was first conceived, the Nonpartisan League, using the direct primary as its weapon, swept into the state offices of North Dakota practically every candidate it had named, and secured control of all the government machinery except the Senate, where hold-over terms saved the opposition a majority of eight votes. The League's candidate for governor, a stranger even to the farmers themselves on the day he was nominated, received a vote four times that of his opponent.

It is the completeness of this first success which will make the Nonpartisan League a factor in political developments of at least the next few years. For the possibilities of organization have been as strikingly portrayed for the farmer as the enactment of the Adamson law seemed to portray them for the industrial workman. Enough capital can be made out of the achievement of capturing North Dakota to keep the movement going in other western states—at least until the farmers have tried in one or two elections to duplicate that success. The same shrewd methods of organization will rally support for the League's program, adapted in its details so as to meet the varied local conditions. As a political force, the movement presents a new method and a new point of attack. In the larger field of political and economic theory it presents little that is new. Its program is a radical one, of course, measured by what the two established parties stand for. But it marks no departure from the ideas of property rights which the American farmer has traditionally held. Like the Populist and the Granger and the Greenbacker, the North-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

western farmer is insistent in his demand that the state must step in—but step in only to the point of controlling the processes of marketing. The functions and responsibilities of the state must be expanded to an extent which only out-and-out Socialists have heretofore been willing to advocate. But the farmer has not changed in his opposition to collective ownership of the land itself. It is not the commune of the new Russian citizen at which the Nonpartisan League is aiming; it is individualism in production, socialism in distribution and a " natural " market-way to the consumer.

CHARLES MERZ.

In Explanation of Our Lapse

IN the presence of accomplished events, what I wrote for these columns a few weeks ago on the conscription of mind is strangely remote and pallid. The increase of intolerance of discussion to the point of religious bigotry has been so rapid that years might have passed. In the face of such intense and violent reactions as now prevail, commendation of sanity is no more audible than is any other still small voice of reason amid howling gales of passion. With treason and sedition there can be, there should be, no parley. And it would be impossible to put the popular notion of what constitutes treason and sedition better than it has been put by a distinguished academic authority in saying that with the entrance of the United States into the war what had before been wrongheadedness became sedition and what had been folly became treason. When summary rhetoric displaces the decisions of the courts, when such an utterance is enthusiastically cited in justification of the abrupt dismissal of college teachers, it is idle to appeal to reason. We shall not tolerate treason; and if you wish to know what is treason, the answer is as definite as it is uproarious: Treason is every opinion and belief which irritates the majority of loyal citizens. For the time being the conservative upholders of the constitution are on the side of moral mob rule and psychological lynch law. In such an atmosphere a sober effort to locate the real abode of folly and wrongheadedness would itself appear treasonable.

The appeal is no longer to reason; it is to the event. What the event will be is certain in the light of historic fact. Everywhere, even among peoples not so habituated to free criticism and free talk as is the American, the attempt to meet opinion with a club and belief with a bludgeon has defeated itself. The only open questions are as to the time of the reaction and the direction it will take. One may hope that the suddenness of the onset bespeaks an equally quick recovery, although one deprecates the expectation that it will be as violent. Unless a halt is called, it is altogether likely that the great silent unperturbed mass of America, which believes in the war and which has confidence in the righteousness of the cause and in the force of the American people to work its will in an orderly way, will be provoked to sudden wrath in favor of fair play. As I write it is not settled whether the official in Washington who is clothed with a power Michaelis must envy will deny the mails to the Call and the Vorwaerts. If he does, it is possible the act will mark a turning point. If the act should not elect Hillquit as Mayor of the City of New York, it would come so near to doing so that, as the saying goes, there would be no fun in it.

Since some such event, rather than what philosophers have called rational discourse, is now the decisive factor, it seems better to inquire into the cause of our sudden lapse than to combat it with idle words. We are told both by pacifists and inflamed patriots—who have so much in common in their mode of thought—that no explanation is required; that the phenomenon is an inevitable accompaniment of war psychology. I doubt it. By all reports, we have gone further in the path of bigotry in a few months than England went in years. France was too busy and too serious to indulge itself similarly. We have to go to Germany to find an out and out parallel, as we should have to go to German professordom to find an adequate analogue to the behavior of some members of an American university faculty of applied science—action which would persuade even a pragmatist of the difference between pure and applied science. And Germany, as we have well learned, exhibited its angry intolerance because of special causes, especially because of its regimented docility and because it was deceived as to the facts. No, we cannot accept this lazy explanation by war psychology. To discover the special causes invites curiosity; the actual discovery might contribute something to a sound recovery.

The first explanation which suggests itself does not, in my judgment, take us very far. To some extent and in some instances, loyalty has been solicited into the paths of a passionate bigotry as a means to the accomplishment of private ends, whether satisfaction of a long cherished grudge or achievement of some immediate victory in the long drawn out economic struggle. There are doubtless some who have the will to exploit the circumstances of war in this fashion. But success depends upon the presence of other less deliberate, more spontaneous and widespread factors. Among these I should place first doubt as to the depth of our own national unity. Much of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

violence of current intolerance is unconscious testimony to a suspicion that the diverse ingredients of our population are not, after all, so integrated as we desire. There was so much unwise talk about hyphenatedism before the war, unpatriotic militarists permitted themselves such unbridled denunciation of our immigrant population, that a subtle uneasiness was created. We have had sufficient evidence of German intrigue and unfaith to demand general alertness against those efforts at disunion and division which are genuinely, that is to say legally, treasonable. But various would-be leaders and noisy leagues are not morally innocent of promoting disunion through the distrust which they have sown of all who have dared to differ from them in matters of policy. Such an atmosphere of undefined suspicion and doubt is just the one which most readily calls out intolerance. And this intolerance creates by its methods an uncertainty which did not before exist. Considering our remoteness from Europe, our historic isolation and our heterogeneity of population, it is a fair guess that future history will be amazed at the certainty and unity of our national conduct. Let us hope it will not also be called upon to state that the serious blemish in the record comes from the divisive action of those who generated discord in their excited readiness to detect and denounce it where previously there had existed only a difference of opinion to be met with argument. In particular, if it turns out that the immigrant population from Russia which might, because of the Russian revolution, have been won to ardent support of our American war policy has been alienated from its support by substitution of an unsympathetic moral coercion for a sympathetic appeal to argument, a heavy responsibility will lie at the door of the present bigots of patriotism.

The other explanation is more creditable to us, and augurs better for a wholesome as well as a speedy recovery. We are unused to the ways of war, and like every eager and energetic beginner we are pressing our stroke. In many ways we have been tumbling all over ourselves and getting in our own way since war was declared. The exhibition, even if awkward, is not altogether unlovely. The amusement aroused by the display is tinctured with affection as for all the riotous gambolings of youth. It is not to our discredit that we were unfamiliar with the ways and usages of war, and that we were incapable of displaying, for example, the ordered decency of the French who have lived for decades in the sobering presence of a national danger. Getting into the war really upset our equilibrium for the time, not because we were opposed to the war, but because of our desire to make not only a good job of it but also a speedy and extensive one. To do everything and to do it all at once, with the biggest war loans, the most airplanes and so on, has been our desire.

And I believe—though it may be my hope is the source of my belief—that some of our intolerance at diversity of opinion and our willingness to suppress the civil liberties of democracy in the name of loyalty to democracy is merely a part of our haste to get into the war effectively, a part of the rush of mobilization, which, thank heaven, had to be improvised because of our historic and established unmilitarism. So far as such is the case, positive achievement will restore sanity because it will mean attainment of maturity and of the self-confidence and orderly discipline that mark the passage of youth into maturity. Meantime it behooves liberals who believe in the war to be more aggressive than they have been in their opposition to those reactionaries who also believe in war—and who believe that loud denunciation of treason on sight is the best way to regain a political prestige of hate badly discredited. Let the liberal who for expediency's sake would passively tolerate invasions of free speech and action, take counsel lest he be also preparing the way for a later victory of domestic Toryism.

JOHN DEWEY.

They Do It Better in England

IT is a pity more people do not read the Congressional Record or the British parliamentary reports for amusement. They have sandy stretches, of course, arid wastes of tariff reforms and harbor improvements, but these are worth traveling if one is sometimes rewarded by finding the treasure of a suffrage debate. This is where men rise and deliver their souls, where unconsciously they yield up their private personalities, and not only theirs but the types they represent. Here the antis are still making a stand for a man's ancient privilege of being the only political animal of the human species; and a picturesque company they are, far more so than their commonsense opponents, even as Sir Amadis of Gaul is more romantic than the latest treatise on political economy.

Antis can be studied best in British parliamentary reports, since Parliament has considered woman suffrage more recently than Congress. One marvels first at the sameness of their peculiar rhetoric. On the very eve of defeat they add to life's quaintness in the exact manner of their triumphant past. Only rare fiction portrays a character as effectively as Sir Frederick Banbury sketches himself, and all

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Banburys of this world, in an anti-suffrage speech made last May before the House of Commons. He does not deny that women have proved absolutely necessary to the conduct of Britain's warfare, a fact which even Mr. Asquith accepts as final proof that they deserve to be voting citizens, and yet he has to refuse them that vote. It seems a difficult box to squirm out of, but Sir Frederick has a sinuous method. He bases his argument on testimony as to feminine character, given by that noted psychologist, Sir Walter Scott.

"It is stated," the subtle baronet observes, "that women have done so well in the war that many people have changed their opinion. Who expected women not to do well in the war? What is the character of woman? Sir Walter Scott knew the character of woman. He said this:

> "'Oh woman! in our hours of ease,
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
> When pain and anguish wring the brow,
> A ministering angel thou!'

"That is the character of woman. She is always like that. And because it is proved that Sir Walter Scott knew the character of woman—I do not know how long ago, perhaps 100 years ago—because he knew their character, because their character has remained the same, and now when we are in pain and trouble, when pain and anguish wring the brow, they are ministering angels, and when we know that in our hours of ease they will be uncertain, coy and hard to please, why is it that in those circumstances we are to surrender the future government of this country into their hands?"

The report is verbatim. It is tainted with no chemistry of second thought. It has the groping of true spontaneity. Sir Frederick is worth adding to a stock of entertainment. One discovers him with real glee. Not every day is it given to contemplate a man that can think of woman in the abstract as a piece of elastic, long enough when it is stretched by the pull of emergency and snapping back to inadequate shortness when the tension is over.

The same debate is also rich in speeches by Sir Charles Hobhouse, the man of frankness. Only a presentiment of immediate danger forces him to abandon Anglo-Saxon reticence. The path of his duty lies through a mention of sex. Fear of society's ostracism might silence a less determined man, but Sir Charles is fighting for the holy cause of things as they are. He has noted that the birth-rate has decreased, and commensurately, damning fact, with the increase in women's political rights. Women have the municipal franchise; the birth-rate is dwindling—it must be out of the wild ferment of these twin ideas that he declares: "We are forcing upon women the double obligation of motherhood and an artificial complication of industry and politics. . . . The pains and suffering which are entailed on some of them are beyond the imagination of any man to understand and comprehend." Then, in humanity's interest, he leaps clear over what he knows to be the very boundaries of decency. "I believe in talking plainly on this subject, because it is important. They are subject to the strain of bearing children, when men are devoting their years to the study and formation of character and ideals. It will put upon woman a physical and mental strain, which she is incapable of carrying. This policy might very well mean an immense destruction of the population."

With a composure that bordered on stoicism, the House endured the disclosure that women bear children, and there was no rioting at the thought that the next generation was at the ignorant mercy of mothers who, of necessity, could acquire neither character nor ideals. But in reply to the speaker's leading argument the caustic Lord Hugh Cecil had this to say: "The right honorable baronet dwelt on the great sufferings of women and the great strain of the vote. Really, has he ever given a vote himself, and has he felt the smallest wear and tear? Even if I had a severe toothache I should have been able to go through the simple clerical process of putting a cross opposite the name I least disagreed with."

And from this one might infer that the defenders of suffrage are not at all second to the antis when it comes to providing sheer entertainment. But the inference would be wrong. The suffrage arguments are so prosaically self-evident, so deeply rooted in the commonplaces of democracy, that there is no fun about them. When they slip into wit, it is mere conscious persiflage, not at all comparable with the fine unconscious humor that winks from every anti speech. The tremendous increase in the number of women in industry, the great services of women in the war, the keen desire of large groups of women for the vote, what are these tediously familiar truths contrasted with that flavor of the quaintly obsolete which clings to the opinions of the Hon. Mr. Burdett-Coutts, né Bartlett, a statesman who was not too fierce a masculinist to take the name of his wife. He speaks from the heart:

"Woman's influence over man for good is enormously increased by the eternal inequality that nature has ordained between the two sexes. But when you destroy this fine balance of nature, when you give her the same physical right in government as a man, then you bring her down to the level of man and impair the very foundations of that moral and spiritual influence she has exercised over man

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to man's inestimable benefit. You are destroying the delicate equipoise which nature herself has adjusted between the moral influence of woman and the physical strength of man."

But the delicate equipoise of Mr. Burdett-Coutts was not sufficiently respected by the House of Commons. Mr. Ramsay McDonald and other unpoetic Members threw rude bricks into his dainty verbal fabric by wondering how long the physical strength of the soldier would last without the physical strength of the woman munition-maker; and why it was that even anti Members allowed women to campaign for them to the extent of all but physically shoving electors into the polling-place. When was the delicate equipoise upset? It appeared to balance nicely while the woman campaigner made speeches from public platforms, or while she buttonholed a man and tagged him with the political ticket of her candidate. But if she should attempt to follow her booty across the threshold of the polling-place, then nature would begin to tremble for her eternal adjustments.—Embarrassing questions flew thickly at Mr. Burdett-Coutts.

Against arguments involving such fine-spun considerations, one may set the military bluntness of the honorable, gallant and pugilistic Member for Central Finsbury, Colonel Archer-Shee. There is no haze of dialectics about this honest soldier-man. "I know quite well," he asserts, "that enormous numbers of soldiers do not want women to have the vote, not because they do not like the ladies, but because they believe that voting is a man's business."

Will the Congressional Record ever provide as varied a feast? The recent debate in the House of Representatives about the creation of a special committee on woman suffrage promised well. Yet one dares not hope for much. Our antis are indeed brimming over with the same spirit as their English brethren, but they are not to the manner born. They can flute ballades to the padded home, but the note of real romance is lacking. They are awkward amateurs in the subtle Gothic tracery of unreason and the clinging arguments of an ivied past. England was not feudal in vain. Still it was not the sensitive Hobhouses, the poetic Banburys or the elemental colonels who had the last word. The House of Commons voted in favor of the woman suffrage amendment with 385 Ayes to 55 Noes.

SIGNE K. TOKSVIG.

A COMMUNICATION

Liberals in Alliance

SIR: I should like to express my appreciation of your sympathetic article on my recent book, The English-speaking Peoples, and, if you will permit me, I shall add some brief comments on the points raised in your criticism. We are apparently in agreement that the lack of an interstate organization and the general self-regarding spirit of international relations that is largely the result of this anarchy are fundamentally inconsistent with the ever-increasing interdependence of the modern world. We are evidently also in accord that there is urgent need for close coöperation between all the English-speaking peoples and, furthermore, that an inclusive League of Nations is essential if ever the present marked schism dividing the states of western civilization is to be closed. Where we apparently diverge is in our estimates of the immediate value and real practicability of these two essential steps. You say that "the practical conclusion" of my introductory chapters on the nature of the existing international system "is often far more the immediate application of the wider internationalism of the League of Nations than the duo-nationalism of an Anglo-American alliance." I should go even further and assert that the conditions described and analyzed furnish a complete *rational* justification for the immediate establishment of a world-state. But, unfortunately, this is not a world of pure reason; mankind is largely governed by instinct, impulse, and emotion. Any scheme of reconstruction, be it domestic or international, that ignores fundamental psychological forces is bound to fail.

Whatever our ultimate ideals may be, no progress towards them is possible unless we face realities and take into account what is attainable under given conditions. It is my firm conviction—it may, of course, be an entirely mistaken one—that, as a result of the intense exacerbation of national feelings resulting from the outbreak and conduct of the prolonged war, it will be impossible to create an inclusive League of Nations that will have even a modicum of initial vitality unless it is based upon a close political association of the English-speaking peoples. You yourself admit that "there is assuredly a place for this great English-speaking bloc in the assembly of the nations." My contention merely is that unless this association is formed the league will come to a premature end, thus greatly harming the cause of internationalism. At best, the projected comprehensive league will for a considerable time be a feeble body, but, with the probability of the general peace being safeguarded by such an English-speaking association, it may in time gain vigor and be able to lead an independent life.

All associations of individuals and groups necessarily imply some diminution of the apparent freedom of action enjoyed by those joining them. Unquestionably the alliance under discussion would condition America's part in world affairs, but not, so it seems to me, in the sense and to the degree that you intimate. When you reconstitute the past on the supposition that an Anglo-American alliance

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had been in effect, you state that America would not have supported various English policies, among them that towards Morocco of 1904-1911, and that towards Persia of 1907-1911. But those were distinctly French and Russian, not English, policies. In both cases traditional English policies—whether justifiable or not is not the point here—were reversed in view of the overt German menace. There is every reason to believe that this reversal would not have taken place had the United States and the British Commonwealth been in close alliance. When you state that England is obliged to have a policy concerning the claims of the Nationalist Party in Italy towards Dalmatia and similar questions, and that "an alliance with England means that we should support her policy and be responsible for it," you are making what seems to me to be an unwarranted assumption. It is obvious that the policy of England would in the event of such an alliance be somewhat different from what it otherwise would be and that it would be the result of the joint deliberations and decisions of the two contracting parties. Such an alliance would profoundly affect the foreign policies of both aggregates and, presumably, in a liberal direction. By affording the desired security, it would strengthen the liberal forces in both.

For a specific instance, it could not be formed unless those who desire to use the Monroe Doctrine and Pan-Americanism in order to secure exclusive economic privileges and who aim to convert the Caribbean into a purely American lake abandoned their self-regarding nationalistic purposes. Similarly, it would lessen the justifiable apprehension in the British Commonwealth whenever a European state makes advances that might threaten the imperial lines of communication and unquestionably it would thus lead to a more rapid development of the backward peoples of the world under a more international and broader tutelage.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that the inveterate tendency of all peoples to take the purity of their own motives for granted and to question those of their neighbors is the most prolific source of international friction. In this respect, we Americans are especially guilty, being markedly prone to ignore our own beams and motes. Throughout your article there seems to me to run the assumption that the English code of international ethics is decidedly lower than the American one. Neutral observers are far from agreeing with such a view. Thus very many Europeans and a large number of Spanish-Americans as well, see in the Monroe Doctrine elements of the most selfish imperialism. According to the interpretation of Georg Brandes, "the United States fought Spain in 1898 to gain access to the riches of Cuba." It is true, as a result of this war, we acquired Porto Rico and the Philippines and were able to secure such preferential treatment for our manufactures in the Cuban market that the door has been partially shut to others. Yet, ethically and historically, Brandes' facile explanation is most shallow, but not more misleading, however, than are many popular explanations of the complex forces and motives that led to the expansion of the British Empire in the nineteenth century.

GEORGE LOUIS BEER.

New York City.

CORRESPONDENCE

Who Shall Be Saved?

SIR: In The New Republic for September 22nd one of your editors in a review of one of Mr. Wells's books demolished Christianity. At least in a single facile sentence he disposed of its claims to enrich human life.

And now in the number dated October 6th Miss Rebecca West, with an Entente-like ferocity for a military decision, brings up superfluous reinforcements and administers the coup de grace. "And the fact that they belong to religious organizations argues that they possess uncritical minds." The pen is mightier than the sword; but does she realize how indiscriminate is her slaughter? Was Belgium ever treated worse? If it is because we are religious that she more especially despises us Christians, from Jesus down through Savonarola to Phillips Brooks, not forgetting Dwight L. Moody and Maud Ballington Booth, we have had good company from the beginning until now. But if it is because we are organized, who then shall be saved? Is not The New Republic a highly organized instrumentality? Are not even the Bolsheviki organized? And the People's Council? Are we all then alike uncritical and damned? Or is it in the peculiar combination of being Christians and being organized that our crime lies?

In the same issue of The New Republic, Professor Young leaves me with the impression that he commends certain brilliant figures in the literary world who have sinned grievously against the most cardinal principles of morality —seducers like Goethe and Byron, e. g.—not in spite of their assaults upon humanity's higher life but because of them. He would apparently have no censure for them because of their abominable influence upon society and their treachery to noblesse oblige.

In order to be a "liberal," to be broad in one's sympathies toward every endeavor of men in any field, is it necessary to treat with a cheap superciliousness, a disdain as of the smart set for the honest toiler, all the working-agreements which the race has evolved?

ALBERT L. WHITTAKER.

Grace Church Rectory, Honesdale, Pennsylvania.

Asia Protests

SIR: Your article on Internationalism on the Seas, published in your issue for the 6th of October, 1917, adopts as its fundamental basis what you are pleased to call a German truth, viz., that in war time "the distinctions between the army and industry, between the military force and the civil population are illusory." You also add that the Germans have taught the world that "there is no part of a nation's trade that does not subserve a military purpose."

Yet, curiously enough, in another article immediately following it, on The Future Limitations of Conscription, you seem to have ignored that principle.

In this latter article, you start by saying that although it may be difficult to induce the European nations to give up universal military conscription at once, they should be required, at least, to forego it in the case of subject peoples not enjoying rights of self-government. Later on, however, the chief burden of this article seems to be the pointing out of the danger involved in arming the African and the Asiatic populations that are subjects of the European powers. I wonder if in your remarks relating

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to India, which you particularly mention, you are more concerned with the good of the Indians themselves or with the interests of European capitalism throughout Asia. To an unitiated reader, you seem to be a little scared by the idea of China, Japan and India some day making a common cause against Europe if India also is subjected to a universal military training.

In this argument, however, you pay no heed to the interests of the peoples concerned. Any limitation of universal military conscription in the case of the Asiatic subjects of the European powers does not prevent their conscription for economic and financial purposes, though the latter is as effective for imperialistic military purposes as the former. The only difference is that it reduces the people so exploited to the position of mere "drawers of water and hewers of wood." I may assure you that the Indians are not prepared to continue in that position any longer. If they are to remain in the empire, they demand equal treatment—the same rights and the same obligations as the people of the rest of the empire. If conscripted at all, they would rather be conscripted for military purposes than economically. The former gives them some power and status, while the latter only bleeds them white without conferring any corresponding power or status.

But you forget another point also, viz., that even without conscription the imperialistic powers have great resources in their subject peoples for military purposes. Most of the British empire was conquered for them by the Indian armies. Even in this war, most of the fighting in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, in East Africa, and a good deal of it in the Gallipoli peninsula, has been done by the Indians. By the end of April, 1917, India had raised one million one hundred thousand men for military purposes.

The only remedy for all these difficult problems lies in such international rearrangement of the world as would take away the power of exploitation from all powerful and imperialistic nations and which would confer equal opportunities of development and progress on all the peoples of the earth for themselves and for common humanity. That is the end for which the United States with its noble traditions should strive. That is the hope extended to the peoples of the earth by the utterances of President Wilson.

LAJPAT RAI.

New York City.

A Free Press Here and There

SIR: I read with much interest your editorial comment on my letter to a German professor.

From this comment it would appear that the text of the pamphlet is not as clear as I had supposed, since The New Republic's criticism of the passage on censorship is based on a complete misunderstanding of the import of my words. My German colleague having asserted that our government had manufactured an American opinion hostile to Germany by employing and instigating American newspapers "to spread hatred and contempt for Germany," I replied that the American press was free from governmental control and censorship. This, of course, referred to the then existing American opinion and to the conditions under which that opinion was formed, when Germany was at war and we were still neutral. Even were the limited censorship of the American press which exists today, supplemented by the power of our government to exclude seditious and treasonable matter from the mails, in any way comparable with the censorship and governmental control of the German press which exists in time of war, and to a remarkable extent, also, in times of peace, that fact would be quite irrelevant to a discussion of the conditions under which American opinion was formed in the earlier days of the world war. You will see, therefore, that the discussion is not one which admits of being "brought up to date," since it concerns the opinion of America as a neutral, not at all her opinion as a belligerent.

I may add that my letter was not originally written for publication, the idea that it might contain matter of interest to a wider public being an afterthought. Whatever of value it may have at the present time, lies not in its comparison of German and American press censorship, but rather in the effort it makes to analyze without passion the growth of that public opinion which rendered American intervention in the war inevitable, and in its attempt to interpret America's judgment as to the conditions on which the world may hope to secure a just and enduring peace and the German people expect to regain their lost honor.

DOUGLAS W. JOHNSON.

Columbia University.

International Philippines

HITHERTO the United States has hesitated to declare itself in bread-and-butter terms on any of the immediate issues of the war. It has a virginal fear, it would seem, of "tying its allies' hands." It modestly prefers to sacrifice a substantial proportion of its own material resources and flesh and blood before venturing a timid suggestion or two. Of tiresome generalities we have had enough. It is true that in international affairs advice unaccompanied by some share of sacrifice is apt to meet with vexation if not, indeed, active resentment. To the moral prestige, however, of a vigorous support of the internationalization of the German colonial possessions in Africa the United States could very readily, and without the spilling of a drop of blood, add the compelling force of a genuine sacrifice on its own part. It could offer to turn over the administration of the Philippines to the international League.

Such a proposal would, at one stroke, give the best kind of guaranty of the sincerity of American protestations of international ideals (a sincerity that various recent events have not helped to make any too evident to neutrals), set the ball rolling towards an affirmative policy of international organization, extract at least some of the teeth of the junker and imperialist elements in both Germany and Britain, and rid this country of a very white elephant.

EDWARD SAPIR.

Ottawa, Ontario.

"The Price of a Home"

SIR: Mrs. Hallam's article, The Price of a Home, in your last number reminded me irresistibly of a little book of Harriet Martineau's—on Education, I think—which I have not seen for more than thirty years. The passage which made an indelible impression was that in which she tells how it first came over her childish mind that she should have to brush her teeth, twice every day, three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, all the years of her life. She felt that she would rather lie down and die, there and then. I wonder if Mrs. Hallam would like to start a movement against brushing one's teeth.

L. W. HOPKINSON.

Cambridge, Massachusetts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

After the Play

A GREAT many Americans never go to the Hippodrome in New York. They think that it offers a vast, crude entertainment, designed to earn guffaws and reminiscent of the untidy peanut. More vital mistakes could be made, but none more complete. The house is certainly vast. It has 5,697 seats, according to the five-cent program, and if the stage were an acre in size (how big is an acre?) the stage-population would sometimes be 600 to the acre. But the basis of the entertainment is not that heavy vulgarity which the word "popular" has been known to suggest. Vulgarity is still to be found in New York vaudeville. Such unfashionable houses as Proctor's on 23rd Street, and the Grand Opera House on 8th Avenue (once "the most elegant theatre in the world") still harbor the kind of amusement that was habitual before the flood. There you can see color-effects that were popular in the day of Loïe Fuller. You can hear singing that could only be properly diagnosed by an ear-nose-and-throat specialist, and you can behold the most amateur dancing. The vulgarity is mainly in the humor. There are innumerable jokes by the Jews and the Irish on the Jews and the Irish that keep the tone of the peddler's cart and the back fence. There are broad schoolboy jokes about spooning and marriage, and elephantine allusions to underwear that make the gallery roar with laughter, and quips about the police department and saloons and kitchen sinks and back alleys that still provide a grin. But this kind of groundling entertainment, avoided by the re-fined, has so little in common with the Hippodrome that it is quite inaccurate to confuse them. The Hippodrome is practically in the Broadway mode.

When you consider that the best seats downstairs are retailed for two dollars and a half, with the privilege of paying the 10 per cent war tax reserved for the public when the law takes effect November 1st, you lose the illusion that this entertainment is economically "popular." It is true that the second gallery costs only a quarter (and is worth only a quarter), but it is the business downstairs that determines the standard on the stage; and that is the conventional standard set by well-fed, prosperous America. The present show is called a musical revue, "Cheer Up!" by name. Because the house is a monster it is actually less a revue than a warp of the ordinary expensive vaudeville on a woof of circus. But granted this difference which the size of the building requires, you get the species of humorous diversion that at present has national vogue.

The limitation of these attempts at wholesale entertainment is very simple: You can please all of the audience some of the time, and some of the audience all of the time, but you cannot, etc. No 5,697 people come that way. For my part I enjoy the ostentation, the pageantry, least of all. Next to that, I take the least pleasure out of the performing animals, sub-human or human. The diving horse I do not dislike, though an albino circus horse always seems to me to be so little equine that nothing he could do would astound me. But I hate enormously to see a man swiveling madly around, hanging on to a trapeze by one toe. This particular entertainment is accomplished by a troupe that rushes on in an armored motor. Up out of the motor rises a steel framework, with a revolving cross-piece on top. At one extremity of the revolving piece is the khaki acrobat with his trapeze, at the other a khaki mechanic in a sort of steel cigar with a propeller on it. The noxious scheme is to speed up the propeller, start the cross-piece swinging so furiously around that the mechanic is at the horizontal and then have the acrobat hang on by his little finger, his little toes. It is sickeningly unpleasant, not so much for the man who may fall as for the man he may fall on. It is strange to reflect that it is really fundamentally less precarious than sitting at a desk and advocating an early peace.

Dexterity must be fascinating to any number of people. The Hippodrome, at any rate, proceeds on that assumption. There are lightning artists who draw Pershing in six seconds or pin twenty rags into the form of a snowy landscape in half a minute. There is a bicyclist who pops himself up steps. There are swimmers, feminine, who dive gracefully in every possible manner. The touch of beauty in the diving enhances it, as well as the hint of sex, but the really exciting dexterity is that exhibited by the troupes of Arabs who whirl and bound through the air.

As against flying buttresses of human athletes and divers who cleave water as soundlessly as a walker cleaves air, the large spectacles are a waste of effort. To see the profile of an Atlantic liner loaded with soldiers moved from left to right, disclosing New York harbor as it creeps out to the wings, allows one to gasp with surprise; and the spectacle of the sphinx and the historic review from Columbus to dental Theodore induce one to wonder at the extravagant investment. But only a really great director who is an artist and loves beauty has a right to undertake these spectacles. The Hippodrome management has learned nothing from the fleeting hints of loveliness that were given out by Mr. Mackaye's pageants at Columbia. Patriotism is supposed to be enough, ladled out as an æsthetic gravy.

But one forgives much to a management that gives a great place to its clowns. America gets so much good clowning free of charge that the standard ought to be high for the Hippodrome. Think of the United States Senate. Among the presidents of our universities there is considerable natural talent in this department, and the evangelical platform is not without its claims. Nor must we forget the abbreviated Sulzer engagement in New York or the superlative performance by the impeached governor of Texas. The liquor and the anti-liquor trades, the undertaking trade, the trade of goose-step patriotism, the busy boosters of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, the anti-aircraft defenders of New York, the *marraines* of poetry with a new crèche of American poets every year, the Union of Superannuated Statesmen Opposed to Woman Suffrage but in Favor of Revolution in Cochin-China—all these supply unlimited clowning free of charge. And yet the Hippodrome amuses. When its clowns are in action it can rightly say "Cheer Up!"

The horses employed by the admirable furniture movers are not subtle humorists, but their foot-work surpasses human hope and they do everything in their extreme misfortune that the most heartless child could wish. The clown who assists the bicycle act is masterly. His happy inanity is never tiresome, he is so completely in character from the start. Mr. Nat M. Wills is just the sort of hobo that prosperous America affords to think funny. He is rather funny in his stereotyped way, but the wit in Mr. Fred Walton's pantomime with his wooden soldiers is more attractive than the verbal slapstick of Mr. Wills.

The chemistry of entertainment often means that sweetness turns to acid immediately. Only beauty and comedy redeem the ostentation and sentiment and stale humor of the conventional show. There is some comedy but little beauty in "Cheer Up!," the music particularly failing of enchantment. And yet 5,697 average Americans come to be cheered up twice a day. F. H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books and Things

NOBODY is wider awake than Mr. Raymond Macdonald Alden, professor of English at Leland Stanford, to the difficulty of writing a book that shall live up or down to such a title as Tennyson: How to Know Him (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $1.50 net). "It is a commonplace," Mr. Alden says in his preface, "that Tennyson does not require a guide-book in the same sense as Browning or many another writer. Indeed it would have been somewhat easier to write this book if he had been essentially eccentric, irregular or obscure: the critic would have had a more agreeable sense of being indispensable." Nothing could be truer. Tennyson is almost everywhere easy to understand. But he is not easy to appreciate. It was Mark Pattison, I believe, who said that appreciation of Milton was the reward of consummate scholarship. An ideal reader of Tennyson would be somebody who had lived long in England, in the country and near the sea, who had studied the trees and birds and flowers and seasons and waters of England with loving and accurate eyes; somebody, too, who was familiar enough with the classical poets to hear the Greek and Latin echoes in Tennyson's voice, and to whom these echoes were dear. No handbook, no matter how hard it tries, can conceivably be anything but a very inferior substitute for this experience, for the long years in which Time has patiently ripened the fruits of reading and observation. Mr. Alden is too wise to attempt this impossible. The manner of his book, as he himself says so modestly and pleasantly, is "the manner of one who should read aloud from the poet to a company gathered by the evening fire, supplying such preliminary information and criticism as might be helpful to the listeners."

But the ideal reader of Tennyson, if we take for our ideal the reader who would get the greatest possible enjoyment from his poetry, is even more exceptional than this. He has other qualifications than those I have mentioned. The ideas of Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, although familiar to him, have become familiar so recently that he is still capable of surprise at finding these ideas used, and of pleasure at finding them used after a rather decorative fashion, by a poet. He believes that somehow good shall be the final goal of ill, and he believes this in a spirit of pious and docile acquiescence. He is in no great hurry to take off his coat and accelerate the inevitable cosmic processes. He is almost as patient as God. Fear of losing the good that we have slows up his pursuit of the good that we have not. No great radical, this ideal reader. Kings and queens, if English, are dear to him. When you tell him that obedience is the courtesy due to kings he feels no temptation to smile, for he is certain that we needs must love the highest when we see it. His occasional doubts exist in order that they may be slain by his faith. From the great central doubts he is serenely free. He is no more capable of doubting that God exists and means well by humanity than of doubting that Queen Victoria existed and meant well by England and the colonies. This ideal reader's God is a very little like the Empress of India and a good deal like some far-off divine Headmaster. In an Annunciation, if this ideal reader of Tennyson painted it, the Virgin would slightly resemble Victoria, and the Angel Gabriel would slightly resemble Dr. Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was sent, more than willing, to tell the young princess that she was queen. In other words, the ideal reader of Tennyson is extinct.

It is also true that he never existed. Who, at the present moment, can be put in his empty and never-occupied place? That is the question which Mr. Alden must have asked himself, and to which, whether he asked it or not, he has given a discerning and persuasive answer. His estimate of Tennyson is very different from our ideal reader's. To Mr. Alden Tennyson is "neither a dramatist nor an imaginative psychologist of much complexity or depth"; he was not highly creative either in the field of thought or in the field of character; he was, like many another Victorian, "rather over-fond of death-beds"; his King Arthur, when he says goodbye to Guinevere, "comes dangerously near, even in his heroic proportions, giving the impression of being a prig or a cad," and Tennyson's style "tends always toward a beautiful circumlocution." A teacher who renounces much of Tennyson, and whose admiration of what is left is strong and contagious—such is Mr. Alden. In one or two respects only do I wish that he had seen his problem a little differently. He says, for example, that Tennyson's blank verse "is a traditional form, passing as rhythmically current coinage at any time between Shakespeare's and ours, but it now seems to many persons to have lost a part of its value merely because it has been current for so long. New rhythms, new speech, for new men and women—so runs our thought." This passage is addressed to a few narrow sectaries, who think all blank verse obsolete, and whose opinions upon this point do not seem to me of the slightest importance. The readers worth helping are those who love blank verse, who read Shakespeare's and Milton's and Shelley's again and again, but who are irritated by Tennyson's. Was it an Oxford or a Dublin undergraduate who made the famous parody?

> And in those days he bought a pair of dogs,
> Caesar and Pompey, each so like to each
> That not one single man in the whole world
> Could tell the difference. And he made a song
> And sang it; strangely could he make and sing.

The wrong audience, it seems to me, is again before Mr. Alden when he attributes present-day depreciation of Tennyson to our tendency to "reject as unpoetical that which is laden with serious thought on moral problems." Surely nobody who is not an idiot objects nowadays to a poet's interest in morals. The question I wish Mr. Alden had answered is more special. Why have the years done more harm to the moralist in Tennyson than to the moralist in Browning or Matthew Arnold or Clough? Why do so many readers, not a bit more intelligent than the men and women who worshipped Tennyson's moralities fifty years ago, find him so poor in moral insight? Why do his moral ideas strike them as almost always either obvious or banal or exasperating? Or, if you agree with me in preferring to put the question the other way, how came any of his contemporaries, many of them persons of high intelligence, to think Tennyson's strength lay where his greatest weakness lies, in his moral judgments? Only after this admission is made, only after we have denied Tennyson as a moralist and thinker, are we ready to give him precisely the admiration he deserves as an observer of nature, a musician and a painter. For us, although he had an indoor spirit, and although the flavor of wild life is not in him, he is still one of the flawless decorative artists, making pictures that are beautifully exact in spite of their rather suave smoothness, working in lacquer and melody, perhaps too studied and bland a concentrator, but a concentrator with few rivals in English.

P. L.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An English Radicalism

Your Part in Poverty, by George Lansbury. New York: B. W. Huebsch. $1.00.

NO one who wishes to understand the labor movement in England can afford to miss this book; few who read it can fail to be captivated by its charm. It is not a program; it is not a treatise. It is simply the expression of an attitude to life which is growing rapidly in importance in every section of the English working classes. Its author is himself a significant political figure. At one time a member of the House of Commons, the editor of the most brilliant labor newspaper in England today, not the least effective inspiration in the famous Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, he has a singularly varied ability. He has been the friend and opponent of such diverse figures as Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Hugh Cecil. He was primarily responsible for the Marconi inquiry. He battled relentlessly for the suffrage cause in the House of Commons and out of it. The poor law school at Shenfield for which he is responsible is a remarkable example of what humanity can do for a complex administrative problem. You will find him as greatly respected among the intellectuals of London as he is worshipped among the workingmen of Bromley-by-Bow. He is an aggressive antagonist of the present English political system without being an adherent of the theory of relentless class warfare. He is one of the few remaining English socialists who, in the heat of the battle, have not yet forgotten that idea of a joyous life they learned from William Morris in the far-off days of Hammersmith communism. More and more there is gathering about him a band of able men, trade-unionists, poets, critics, dons, who find in the strength of his personality and the vigorous nobility of his ideas a real hope for the future. He belongs to no political party, and he retains the eager respect of them all. There have been few men since John Bright to occupy quite the same place in English life.

The whole starting-point of Mr. Lansbury's idea is the conviction that the only question which matters is what Disraeli called the Condition-of-England question. He is clear that poverty is preventible. He is urgent that nothing else is at all adequately worth while until that supreme problem has been handled. But he is also clear that the approach to it involves not merely a reform but rather a revolution in the English way of life. It involves a new theory of the state. It involves a total reorganization of the industrial system. It involves the re-interpretation of the class-structure of society in terms of service from ability instead of profits to ability. Mr. Lansbury's attitude is in no sense born of theoretic speculation. I doubt seriously whether most of the academic names one could mention in this context are so much as known to him. The material for his thought has come from his thirty years' experience on town-councils and poor-law boards and trade-union committees. His attitude is an induction from a leadership in strikes, a membership of the House of Commons, an acceptance of Anglican Christianity which has involved an intimate acquaintance with the social power it exerts. A distinguished French syndicalist once remarked that Mr. Lansbury's life made him doubt very seriously the rightness of his contempt for religion; and it is not difficult to understand the grounds of that realization.

He will take help from whoever can help him. You will find the newest Oxford don stroll out of his office as the last trade-union leader (with fierce suspicion of the intellectuals) goes into it. The staff of his newspaper includes a brilliant English poet and a member of the London Dockers' Union. Mr. Nevinson, Mr. Chesterton, Mr. Webb all write for it on occasion; and there is evidence enough that Mr. Wells feels its criticisms more deeply than any others in England. Not that Mr. Lansbury is convinced that the regeneration of the working-class must come from above. The thousands of workingmen and women who are enrolled in his Herald League are to work out their own salvation; and they work it out by the organization of the industries to which they belong. The real burden of his effort is the intellectual supplementing of the trade-union movement, the insistence that only by the alliance between sober learning and native intelligence can the victory be eventually won. It is Mr. Lansbury's readers who buy Everyman's Library and the volumes in the Home University series. No one searches the London bookstalls with more care than they do. They are the élite of the Workers' Educational Association. They are the radical wing of the Labor Party. They do not believe, like your Marxian socialist, that the slow, sure Marxian catastrophe comes pitilessly on. They are Fabian enough to be reformist. They are intelligent enough to perceive that if politics is grounded upon economics, assuredly an economic movement cannot do without political effort. So they support every measure that may ameliorate the condition of the people. They want shorter hours of labor, provision of meals for the underfed, better wages, better factory inspection, better education.

But, above all, they demand the control of industry. They have come to see that everything else is merely a chimera so long as that supreme weapon is out of their hands. That is not to say that they are state-socialists. I suppose few people are more suspicious of the state than Mr. Lansbury, for the good and sufficient reason that few people have had so deep an experience of its workings. The kind of industrial future to which they look forward is one of economic federalism and the way lies partly in the coöperative system, as the great English society practised it in the famous Dublin strike, and partly in the continuous democratization of factory conditions. They want —they will get—compulsory unionism; and on its basis they will demand factory appointments from below instead of above. They believe whole-heartedly in strikes, partly, as the French believe in them, as a moral influence, and partly from their strategic value where they are wisely begun. They believe in the solidarity of labor, and where one element in its strength is attacked they are insistent that the whole of labor's strength must be directed to its defense. They know the weaknesses of labor, its suspicions, its overlapping, its till recently fatal neglect of the unskilled worker; and it is significant in this regard that two of Mr. Lansbury's closest friends, Mr. Robert Williams and Mr. Tillett, were responsible for the import federation of the transport unions of England, of which the present benefit has already been so great that the future significance is almost inestimable. They realize that the economic strand runs close into the texture of life and outside their work as in it, they coöperate for their mutual enrichment.

Of course it is inevitable that such a movement should have its defects. It is a little shrill. It tends a little naïvely to value rebellion for its own sake, to mistake a gesture for a deed. It rather fatally tends to minimize the strength of the opposition to itself and to fail to realize

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the dangerous love of the Englishman for the status quo. It banks less upon action than upon intention. Its goodwill is too greatly diffused to be capable of the concentration that active propaganda demands. It neglects too much the value of leadership in its insistence upon the significance of the rank and file. That is in some sort a natural mistake; for in the last few years English labor has been badly served by its orthodox leaders. But the real task that here confronts Mr. Lansbury is the organization of discipline without which it is bound to remain merely a voice in the wilderness. It does not sufficiently explore alien minds. And it has to conquer the citadel of English education, to make Oxford history social and Oxford philosophy realistic, to add James and Graham Wallas to Aristotle and Plato, before the education it demands can be proffered with utility.

Its attitude to the war has been refreshing in its reasonableness. Mr. Lansbury was willing to fight for Belgium and he was eager to use all his strength in the fight against Prussian autocracy. But he was insistent that the fight against Prussia must not, as Mr. Churchill recently remarked, bring with it as a by-product the Prussian conquest of England. His whole effort in the war has been to minimize the dangers of bureaucracy, to secure fair treatment for soldiers and sailors who have been rendered useless, to safeguard the future of labor, to obtain attention for the conditions under which women and children are living at home. No one has fought more stoutly than he for protection against profiteerings. The social experiments for which he and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst have been responsible in the East-end of London may touch only the fringe of a great problem; but they point a moral and adorn a tale.

This little book describes the spirit behind this joyous venture. It is the picture of a brave and kindly soul who loves life for its possibilities, and is man enough to be dissatisfied until all who toil can share also in the gain of life. It insists on the inter-dependence of men and draws from it the fundamental lesson that a reverent England has still to learn, the lesson of equality. It is a finely simple index to the thoughts of a great spirit whom the war has given the great opportunity of constructive leadership. Every student of social progress will watch eagerly the blossoming of his effort.

H. J. L.

Gorky's Youth

In the World, by Maxim Gorky. New York: The Century Co. $2.00.

WHY is Gorky writing his autobiography with all its "oppressive horrors of our wild Russian life"? He answers his own question in the first volume,—"It is worth while because it is actual vile fact, which has not died out, even in these days—a fact which must be traced to its origin, and pulled up by the roots from the memories, the souls of the people, and from our narrow sordid lives." What that genius of his has done to this recording of actual vile fact is just what his life did to the world of his childhood. He has dominated it without distorting it, he has made it assimilable by us just as he has made his own almost intolerable boyhood into a thing of significance and growth. But these memories have the air not of being pulled up by the roots, but of being poured out in lavish abundance from one of the most sensitive and vigorous minds of our time. There is an almost oppressive fertility of offering. The incidents follow each other with their rich feeling and suggestivenesss, until one wishes for a little more interpretation, a little more universality, so that we may know what Gorky's later life told him about the promise of those human abysses from which he came. He does give us one beautiful clue where he says that, although the horrors he relates "oppress us and crush so many beautiful souls to death, yet the Russian is still so healthy and young in heart that he can and does rise above them. For in this amazing life of ours not only does the animal side of our nature flourish and grow fat, but with this animalism there has grown up, triumphant in spite of it, bright, healthful and creative, a type of humanity which inspires us to look forward to our regeneration, to the time when we shall all live peacefully and humanly."

This we recognize as the true Russian idea which has come to us in so many different expressions. It is this feeling for the creative power of sheer animal life that has kept alive so accurately in Gorky's mind what would usually press for burial under deep layers of oblivion. But it is wonderful that he should have come out of the orgy of lower-class life so untainted with bitterness and scorn. The remorseless descriptions of his people and their fights and cruelties have nothing of harshness in them. They are artistic truth. Few minds strike such a balance between realism and sympathy. Gorky does not spare, but neither does he excoriate. There is passion enough, but it is the passion that does not spring from the effort to feel powerful, but rather from an insatiable avidity for life, and from an abounding humane love that is always bursting through it. The roots of Gorky's own soul are in the endlessly vital old grandmother, with her noble speech, her forgiveness, her pleasure in the sheer sensual goodness of the world. It was out of her amazing animalism that there sprang the influence, "bright, healthful and creative," which gave Gorky's mind and heart the nourishment they needed. She did not repress the child, and her primitive vigor faced the acrid life with a warmth that kept the child from hatred. He dreaded it, he felt disgust at it, he longed to get into that truer world which came to his imagination from books. But through not hating or despising that under-life his sensitive mind was able to carry it all along with him, etched softly into the detail of these wonderful chapters, now continued in the second volume, In the World.

My Childhood ended with the death of the mysterious and pathetic mother. The child is sent out into the world by his grandfather to earn his living. As shop-boy in a fashionable boot-shop of Nijni, as "washer-up" on a Volga steamboat, as pupil in the workshop of an ikon painter, with intervals of slavery in the house of relatives, and of freedom at home with the old grandmother, the boy's life expands like a fair and sturdy plant in a heavily manured soil. It was just as if some charmed principle of growth were driving him to fruition through this litter of demoralized lives. He keeps singularly chaste, "because the relationship of the sexes was so often and tiresomely brought to our notice in its coarsest form, and was very offensive" to him and his girl playmate.

He rebels at the stupidities of the school, but he pursues books unweariedly, with all "the burdensome humiliations, insults and alarms which his swiftly developed passion" brought him in the trivial bickering household of relatives where he worked. The Goncourts and Balzac and Walter Scott reveal to him, among the trash that he devours, a life that is better than the life he knows, with all its filth and its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

aimless cruelty. His good sense is irritated at the conventional novels that do nothing but reward the good and punish the wicked. He is feeling always for the truth and for his own sincerity, he is pushing out always to make emotional rapport with ideas and feelings that are like what is potential within him. This is the thread that winds through all his bitter purposeless boyhood work. And his mental loneliness is so unrelieved, except for timid contact with the apothecary who knows the meanings of words, the frail little tailor's wife who reads all day long and lends him books, and the beautiful, doubtful "Queen Margot," who has the great books for this austere and starving boy.

The search continues through his ugly life on the steamboat and in the hovels of the town, with their stream of people, preposterous and terrible, unmitigatedly frustrating. It seemed at times, Gorky says, that "a sort of dirty porridge was boiling around me, and that I was gradually being boiled away in it. Life perseveringly and roughly washed out from my soul its most delicate writings, maliciously changing them into some sort of indistinct trash, and with anger and determination I resisted its violence. I was floating on the same river as all the others, only for me the waters were colder and did not support me as easily as it did the others." But he did not sink, and his soul was not disfigured. Neither did he come out of this besotted world in any mood of complacency which, finding life too terrible to face, creates a tolerable world for its own inner fantasy of living. This is the power and wonder of his writing, that it tastes not of escape from reality and of recoil, but of grappling and absorption. Life has not washed out many writings from his soul. He seems to forget nothing. Can we believe that his impression was sensitive enough to carry along with him all this intimacy of talk and detail that he records? Well, what if we cannot? There is nothing that has not the flavor of inescapable truth, however flickering the incident. It is just the function of the literary artist that Gorky is to make everything true which he expresses. Out of the rubble of human existence his genius is building up one of the great life-stories in literature.

R. B.

Recent Publications

General Types of Superior Men, by Osias L. Schwarz. Boston: Richard G. Badger. $2.50.

IN a laudatory preface Jack London describes this book as "one of those immortal, epoch-making works which appear only at very long intervals, and which leave an indelible, constructive impression on the mind of the world," and the more cautious Max Nordau says, "altogether you are a powerful writer." There is considerable excuse for this enthusiasm. Under the guise of a psychological analysis of genius the author presents a most fiery and provocative description of the average man as a child-like animal, content to be exploited both by his terrors and his fear of life. It is epigrammatic and jerky in style with much of the nervous force, the anger at placid stupidity that gives itself fine names, which we can find in Nietzsche at his invective best. For instance, "parallel with this regressive or degenerative method of the philistine of preserving himself in the midst of our predatory régime by dropping off his sensitiveness and his higher aspirations, we see his equally inefficient method of unconsciously trying to preserve the race by procreating more human beings than our parasitical classes and the adverse circumstances can destroy." This is not criticism or science or psychology—it is anger, pure and simple. But it is righteous anger, with something, too, of magic scorn in its spontaneity and drive. Over four hundred pages of it! Yet on nearly every page there is one electric thrill of indignation at the shams and resounding cant of our exploitative barbarism facetiously called civilization. It is a fine book for those fatigued minds that in the misty phrases of "social consciousness" and the like try to disguise their basic terror before the individual intellect.

TIFFANY & CO.

CLOCKS
HALL, MANTEL, DESK AND TRAVELING CLOCKS

FIFTH AVENUE AND 37TH STREET
NEW YORK

Thrilling Deeds of British Airmen, by Eric Wood. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. $1.65.

MORE than sentimentalism makes one hope that recent reports of harsh treatment by the Germans to captured British airmen are untrue. Even in the muck and brutality of this war the ancient tradition of chivalry had not been wholly lost. For three years the Germans have been decent to English aviators forced to descend behind the hostile lines, and for those killed in action they have always kept the honor of a military funeral. So, too, with the British. When Boelke lost his life the English flew slowly over the German lines and dropped floral wreaths, inscribed to a gallant foe. Mr. Wood, in a quaintly unreal and formal English of the penny weekly newspaper correspondent, tells the British side of it, giving honest praise to the enemy. Valor and skill can go no further than in some of the deeds recorded here. To plane several

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Will You Back The Women's Army?

THE UNITED STATES now has two armies, one in France and one in the workshop. The workshop army is recruiting mothers and young girls. Many mothers are working all night in the shop and all day with their children and home. Young girls are going to munition plants in strange cities. Our Country has called these women; they are in the second line of defense.

The National Women's Trade Union League

is working to adjust this army to the highest National service. Hours must be regulated, living conditions must be safeguarded, wages must be maintained, mothers and young girls must be protected.

Will You Help?

Donations to the League work may be sent with the following:

NATIONAL WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE,
139 North Clark Street, Chicago.

Enclosed please find $..... for the work of your League. I am interested in safeguarding the women and girls who have entered industry at this time in response to our Country's call.

Name.....

Street.....

City.....

State.....

thousand feet from behind the German to your own line, with the flames from a leaking petrol tank burning away the leggins and flesh around the feet that control the precious balance wires, takes a higher order of courage than the passion of give-and-take combat. Every impulse is to let go, to lose consciousness and relax into the peaceful blackness of a fiery lunge to earth. Even with the greatest concentration of purpose and intelligence the aviator has to confront new technical problems as his supports and planes rapidly burn away. The wonder is that anyone ever contrives to get back to headquarters. Yet hundreds of British airmen have done it, some of them dying within a few minutes after their disabled machines had touched the ground, but, as the statement accompanying their posthumous award of the V. C. puts it, "with the sought-for military information and photographs intact." Mr. Wood tells of attacks on Zeppelins, submarines and military bases, fights in the air against overwhelming odds—imperturbably, as the English tradition is—dramatic rescues of disabled comrades in the service, new evolutions, etc. It is a record of heroism and gallantry, which even the stiffness and naïvete of Mr. Wood's style can hardly fail to make "thrilling."

Kelly of the Foreign Legion. New York: Mitchell Kennerley. $1.00.

KELLY OF THE FOREIGN LEGION is a series of letters from a young man who enlisted in that romantic branch of the French army. These letters cover a period of seven months, from the time of his enlistment to his disappearance. A plain matter of fact record, this account of trench life is interesting. The actions, in which the narrator had taken part are baldly but clearly described, and his account of his companions and their doings is full of action and color. That he enjoyed the experience is manifest in spite of his repeated assertions that war is asinine and his ridicule of the theory that war is grand. It is an interesting human document. One would like to hear the rest of his story. There is also a history of the Foreign Legion appended.

Contributors

to this issue

WILLIAM HARD has contributed articles on economics and politics to various periodicals and is now in Washington studying problems of organization for The New Republic.

JOHN DEWEY is professor of philosophy at Columbia University and is the author of Democracy and Education, and other books on education and metaphysics.

LEO STEIN is a New Yorker who has lived much in France and Italy and has made a life study of painting.

SIGNE K. TOKSVIG was graduated from Cornell University in 1916 and is now on the staff of The New Republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED